

Theaters-1930

Picture Films, etc.

# NEGRO COMPANY TO MAKE TALKIES IN CALIFORNIA

Foster Photoplay Co. To Be  
Headed By William Foster  
Of Chicago

LOS ANGELES, CAL., (ANP)—Announcement has just been made here of the complete organization of the Foster Photoplay Company which proposes to produce talking motion pictures with colored casts and stories of colored people. The promotion has been under the management of William Foster, a former resident of Chicago.

The announcement states that the company has qualified satisfactorily under the rigid California corporation law and that the Bank of America has been selected as a depository for funds. Arrangements are said to have been completed under which the company will produce at the Metropolitan Studio, one of the largest and best-equipped studios in Hollywood.

NEW YORK  
TELEGRAPH

JAN 18 1930

First Negro Theater  
For Berlin Soon

BERLIN, Jan. 17.—Berlin is soon to have its first negro theater. Directors, playwrights and ushers, actors and actresses, the orchestra and the technical staff, all will be negroes.

And yet the Berlin negro theater will not be one "by colored folk for colored folk." There are not enough negroes in this country to fill even a movie house. The total number of negroes living in Germany is estimated at 200, while Berlin's colored residents number about fifty.

The majority of the latter will have some kind of function in the planned theater, which is intended to be a co-operative affair and will open with a revue.

*"Hallelujah"*  
COLORED Norfolkians last week had the opportunity to witness that much discussed talking movie "Hallelujah," admittedly the most spectacular and most superbly acted portrayal of Negro life attempted on the silent or audible screen. And as in every other locality where the picture has been shown, opinion concerning the production ranges from enthusiastic approval to bitter denunciation. *Norfolk, Va.*

Whatever may be said of "Hallelujah," however, it must be admitted that the picture is a signal success as an artistic attempt. "Hallelujah" is a tremendously moving spectacle, sensitively and superbly acted, sympathetically and adroitly directed.

If it is intended to be a composite picture of life as American Negroes live it, then "Hallelujah" fails. It fails because Negro life is too varied for any one picture to depict all the gradations of existence from ignorance and poverty to culture and wealth. Any claim that "Hallelujah" or any other photodrama pictures fully and accurately the true and complete life of the Negro is a mere assumption and defeats its own purposes, for in the nature of things any artistic effort, literary or dramatic, must include selection of the materials to be used.

"Hallelujah" does depict with insight and accuracy a phase of Negro life, as lived in certain environments and by certain classes, victims of an environment created by the white planter of slavery time, where a lack of privacy and crowding of the sexes made for some of the conditions pictured. But that sort of life is fast disappearing, as the social forces of a more modern and enlightened period penetrate an increasing circle of colored Americans.

Granting that some Aframericans do exist and live in the manner shown in "Hallelujah" there is really small ground for some of the indignant criticism with which many greeted the picture. "Hallelujah" depicted in the noblest form the cohesiveness of rural Negro families, the loyalty, the love, the naive and beautiful simplicity of religious faith which are essential characteristics of a predominant number of Negroes. Zeke's mother, like all mothers of all the children of men, was always good and kind. Missy Rose, in her beautiful, forgiving, pure love for Zeke, alone redeemed the picture from being a moral indictment of the race.

Perhaps it was not a pretty picture, but their life in its entirety is not a pretty thing, if we are realists and at all observant. Nothing comes without its price, and if white audiences are prone to accept the portrayal as indicative of the "real" Negro life, then that is the price which is being paid for a vivid demonstration that there are Negro actors whose performances, given the opportunity, can approach if not attain dramatic

perfection, wherein acting slips from mere acting into that realm where unconscious artistry creates the illusion of reality.

There has to be an entering wedge with which to pry open some doors of opportunity. Before Norfolk could have an appropriation for its present colored high school, it was necessary to have it dubbed an "industrial high school." But Norfolk has its colored high school. Before Newport News could have its colored high school, it was necessary that "high" be omitted from the name of the high school. But Newport News has its colored high school. The concession to certain historical attitudes were means to an end, they were enterprising wedges.

Perhaps "Hallelujah" is a wedge which will open a door of opportunity through which will come more roles for the dramatic artists of the race, and in time different, more pleasant, and, at the same time, true and finer dramatizations of Negro life.

In the meantime, it is not without its value to have the most noted critics in the country acclaim a picture entirely acted by Negroes as the finest production of the talking films, and to rate the performances in "Hallelujah" as the most superb in several seasons—and several thousand pictures.

## OSCAR MISCHEAUX MAKES NO BIG HIT WITH HIS "TALKIE" VENTURE

By JOHN MACK BROWN

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Oscar Mischoux, pioneer Negro motion picture producer, brought to the Renaissance Theatre on Saturday his newest photoplay, "A Daughter of the Congo," which he extravagantly labels a "talking singing and dancing film."

In spite of a story which could have been made fair entertainment and a cast of players which could have hardly been better selected, Mr. Mischoux fails to create a worthwhile vehicle. The play deals with a mythical African republic, based upon someone's knowledge of Liberia.

A beautiful girl is rescued from slave traders by a young U. S. army officer who has been sent to organize the constabulary. He educates her and, of course, rescues her from a series of situations.

There are encounters with the natives, weird rites and more or less humdrum happenings in poor selected "tropical settings." Most of the actors over-act and Mr. Mischoux has succeeded again in distorting a story so that intelligent continuity is destroyed.

Katherine Noiset is the heroine. Staggeringly enough she does not marry the apparent hero. Instead she marries his friend and lieutenant. Among the well known actors in the cast are Salem Tutt Whitney, who plays the

Motion Pictures  
and  
Racial Susceptibility.

ony has grown up since the war, there was a hostile demonstration the other day against the motion picture dealing with cattle-rustling and love along the Rio Grande. The film was alleged to reflect injuriously "on the women of Latin America." There were a number of arrests, but the longer consequences of such an incident are hard to say.

There is no doubt that when Latin-American protests become sufficiently numerous the box-office instinct at Hollywood will respond. The traditional "greaser" villain and his female counterpart will follow into the Irish, Jewish and German comic characters whom the universality of the movie has doomed.

To the credit of the theatre screen should be remembered this contribution to human brotherhood. Creating for an audience of countless millions may not be conducive to high art, but it enforces respect for racial and national feelings, even if the motive be materialistic. The esthete may deplore the movie's world of sugar and sentiment, but for the

Up in Harlem, where a very large Spanish-American colony has grown up since the war, there was a hostile demonstration the other day against the motion picture dealing with cattle-rustling and love along the Rio Grande. The film was alleged to reflect injuriously "on the women of Latin America." There were a number of arrests, but the longer consequences of such an incident are hard to say.

Studio Pays \$2307  
To Colored Extras

Los Angeles, Cal.—(ANP)—As an ordinary example of what the motion picture industry means to Los Angeles Negro citizens by way of employment and its effect upon their economic situation, one studio paid \$2,307 to colored extras last week.

This was the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio, now filming "Trader Horn," on their lot at Culver City, after nearly a year on location in Africa. Monday, 200 extras and part men were paid \$1,540. Tuesday's payroll was \$442; Wednesday's \$135; Thursday's \$135, and Friday's \$55.

# NORTH CAROLINA'S FINEST THEATRE OPENED BY ROCKY MOUNT NEGROES

Already the most progressive city in eastern North Carolina, Rocky Mount has added another item to her long list of superlatives. The opening last week of the Savoy Theatre marked an epoch in the business life of this community and contiguous territory. This building is owned by Doctors P. W. and E. J. Burnett of the Burnett Drug Co. and is operated by Doctors Burnett and C. C. Stokes of the Stokes and Daniels Undertaking Co. To these progressive men belongs the credit for this outstanding achievement.

Built at a cost of more than sixty thousand dollars, this theatre is by far the finest of the six in this city. Competent judges have declared it to be the finest in the state and unsurpassed in the entire south in appointment and convenience. Nothing has been omitted in comfort, equipment and service. The exterior of white pressed brick is very trim and embellished with appropriate carvings and images, presents an imposing appearance.

Entering through beautiful glass doors with glittering brass framing the patron finds himself in a brilliantly lighted foyer, on either end of which are dressing room for men and women, respectively. Police and well groomed ushers greet him and he is offered one of seven hundred of the most comfortable seats. There are five hundred seats on the main floors and two hundred in the balcony, which is reached by winding stairs leading from the foyer.

The very latest equipment in a heating and cooling system assures the patron of the safest comfort. The oval shaped walls of celotex, the heavily carpeted aisles and stairways, the soft light from scintillating chandeliers, the beautiful curtains of red velour, set off by footlights of variegated colors, give this theatre a completeness in minute detail.

Two huge Simplex machines with a De Forrest talking equipment render seeing and hearing perfect. The manager is Jackson Dillard. The operator is E. C. Coltrane. The management has announced to give to the public the best at money can buy. The patron is assured of three things: order, comfort and entertainment. Rocky Mount is justly proud of the Savoy.

**Negro Picture  
Star in Town**  
8-27-30

**Brooks Outstanding Pioneer and Should Go Big at Local Houses**  
New York, N. Y.  
When the Lincoln Motion Picture Company operated many years in the production of pictures, Clarence Brooks,

who arrived in New York on Monday, was the country's leading star of color, and in the years that followed none came on the film horizon to dispute that claim in the particular line of work he did. Mr. Brooks is again starring in the all-talking Negro cast picture entitled "Georgia Rose," and Negroes will watch with a great deal of interest the attitude of those managers in the community professing friendship for the Negro to see if this picture is used to entertain the all-Negro clientele in any of the Harlem theatres.

"Georgia Rose" is a story epic of the modern Negro. Unlike the previous all-talking colored cast picture made in Hollywood, which showed the Negro of 60 years ago, "Georgia Rose" is a story with a cast of the present day. The picture is a noteworthy achievement and has received much praise.

The spontaneous reception given "Georgia Rose" is a proof positive that the producers have correctly interpreted the desire of the colored theatre-going public to see an all-talking picture of the present-day Negro. The story deals with the amalgamation of the northern and southern Negro in a middle western community.

It was directed by Harry A. Gant for the Aristo Films in Hollywood and has in its cast such favorites as Evelyn Preer, Irene Wilson, Roberta Hyson, Dora Dean Johnson, Allegretti Anderson, Edward Thompson, Webb King, E. C. Dyer and Spencer Williams.

## Logan Is Erecting Theatre In Durham

DURHAM, N. C., Aug. 14—After months of almost fruitless search for financial backing, George W. Logan, owner of the "Wonderland" theater on East Pettigrew street, with the co-operation of the "Durham group" of business men, finally got the money with which to erect a new \$50,000 first class movie house on the same street, a block from his old theater and next door to the Biltmore Hotel, owned by Dr. Clyde Donnell. 8-16-30

The new theater, which is now going up, and which will be ready for occupancy by October 1, will seat 300 people, and will be equipped with Western Electric sound equipment for "talkies." Mr. Logan will continue to operate the old theater, which has a capacity of 100. A cheaper grade of pictures will be shown at the "Wonderland."

Mr. Logan, a native of Scottsburg, Va., graduated from Hampton Institute in 1911, having specialized in carpentry. He taught manual training and industrial art in Augusta Ga., for eight years before he entered the motion picture business. He started with pictures at New Bern, N. C., with the "Globe," and remained there six years. Then he

went back to Augusta for a year and a half with the "Lenox," after which he went to Goldsboro, N. C., for nine months with the "Yoland." He came to Durham three years ago and opened the "Wonderland." His dream has been to supply the better class of colored people of Durham with a good theater, and he is about to realize his ambition. He employs six people. Thirty-five people are employed on the new theater. A colored contractor, E. A. Boykins, is erecting the building. Boykins is a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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NOTE

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Picture Films, etc.,

# HOOTEN - HOOTEN AFRO-AMERICAN SING MICHEAUX FILM COMPANY

Claim Firm Stole their Material for Pictures.

Alleging that the Micheaux Film Company, incorporated, of New York, stole their act, "The Alphabet Sermon," suit has been filed in New York City by Morris J. Junger, attorney, to recover damages for the infringement for Hooten and Hooten, the well known vaudeville actors, who now make their home in Baltimore.

According to papers filed in the suit, the Micheaux Film Corporation and the Fayette Corporation are being asked to pay damages because of a display of a picture containing the act, or as an alternative to restrict the further display of the said pictures.

## Standard Act

Hooten and Hooten are known throughout American theatrical circles as one of the most laugh-provoking duos on the contemporary stage. Their act, Mr. Hooten told the AFRO-AMERICAN this week, was originated by him when he was a boy. He and Mrs. Ida Hooten, he asserts, have performed the act together throughout their 20 years of married life.

## Made in Jersey

In the billing of the picture named, "The Darktown Revue," Sam Shifferman is named as the producer. It is styled a two-reel sound comedy, an Oscar Micheaux production. The production was made for the Micheaux Film Corporation at the Metropolitan Motion Picture Studios, Fort Lee, New Jersey.

# SOLID SOUTH'S HAND SEEN IN RACE FILM END

Chicago, Ill.  
Houses Will Not Buy Pictures

blazer, made its appearance and was soon followed by "Hallelujah," called by many the greatest of them all. Both of these films enjoyed long runs about the country, particularly in the North, because of the type of Race folk they portrayed, but even this cover-up has failed to establish the films with the theater-going public about the country.

## Days Are Gone

And now comes the news from the Coast that there will be no more pictures of the type discussed above. They do not say as much, but the impression is abroad that the "Solid South" has a deal to do with the decision. Films are released first in the larger houses of the North, where the revenue is best, but in the latter stages of the production's tenure the South is the main selling section. For this reason films are now being made to answer the demands of both sections. There is one thing in favor of the all-Colored film and that is the plea of Broadway and New York in general for such pictures and stage shows, but Broadway can only use films for a limited time. In many cases a picture will remain in New York for a year or more, but the life of a picture is five to six years, and what is to be done with the production once Broadway decides it has outlived its selling value?

When Stepin Fetchit made the announcement that he would produce his own film the critics weren't surprised. They knew well that Step had seen the handwriting on the wall. Surely he will be given spots in films of mixed cast, but the money is not so great where a player is not cast in the starring role.

Close-ups of the movie lots tell us that the day of all-Colored movies are past and add that only a chosen few Race stars will get places in the big time productions. A few years ago "Hearts of Dixie," the trail

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## Micheaux to Produce

### New Film

"The Exile" Ready in  
February

NEW YORK, Jan. 9.—The Micheaux Film corporation, founded in 1918 by Oscar Micheaux, and which has specialized in the production and distribution of feature photoplays ever since has been reorganized with new capital. It will continue the production and distribution of photoplays of Race life, except that from now on the product will be all-talking pictures.

The company, which operated as a Delaware corporation until a few years ago, when the Delaware charter was allowed to expire, is being incorporated as a new company under the laws of the state of New York, with the capital all paid up and no stock for sale. It will be officered as follows: Oscar Micheaux, president; Frank Schiffman, vice president and secretary, and Leo Brecher, treasurer.

They have leased the Metropolitan studios at Fort Lee, N. J., the largest and most fully equipped studios in the East for independent production and will commence making the first feature, "The Exile," under the direction of Oscar Micheaux, Jan. 15.

The cast, which has been in rehearsal for some time, includes among others Charles Moore, Eunice Brooks, George Randol, Lorenzo Tucker, Nora Newsome, Stanley Morrell, Inez Persaud, A. B. DeComatheire, Katherine Nolsette, Norman Reeves, Lou Vernon, Carl Mahon and a number of singers and dancers from "Blackbirds," "Brown Buddies," "Connie's Inn" and the "Cotton club," who will appear in cabaret scenes in the picture.

The production, when completed, will make a tryout on Broadway. Although Oscar Micheaux has produced 25 silent pictures since he commenced directing 12 years ago, all subjects of present day life, this will be his first offering of a picture to the general public. The two talking features to precede this, "Hearts in Dixie" and "Hallelujah," both had their settings in the South and dealt with the Race in his native state. Micheaux contends that since there are more than 1,000,000 non-whites in the North, he feels that the public is in position to possibly appreciate a theme dealing and laying somewhere among these 1,000,000.

The company is contemplating making a couple of short subjects to be

used as "fillers" for the Broadway showing, in conjunction with the feature, and should the general public's appreciation warrant it, as may be evidenced by the Broadway exhibition, the company will seek a special roadshow engagement in a large number of key cities before the picture is released for general distribution.

The production, it is said, will make its Broadway appearance some time during February.

## NINA MAE SIGNS TO MAKE FILM IN AFRICA

"Hallelujah" Star to Appear  
Soon Under European  
Direction

By FLOYD SHELSON  
NEW YORK—Nina Mae McKinney, little American screen star, has signed a contract with one of the largest picture concerns in Europe to make the picture in Africa next fall.

A letter from the little star of "Hallelujah," dated January 6 in Berlin, Germany, brings heartiest greetings to her many friends in the dear old U.S.A. She asserts: "I am going over great here in Berlin and will be here until January 31st, then I will go to Monte Carlo and Cannes. I plan to return to Berlin in April, then to London, England."

### Languages Annoying

"It is very lonesome over here, especially when you can't talk these funny languages, however, the people in our hotel are very nice to us and many of them speak English, so I manage to get along somehow. My Aunt Alice Clinton doesn't like Europe at all, and she will leave for New York in a few weeks."

### Got Lonesome

"Tell Louis Armstrong and Ralph Cooper to write to me, also any of my old friends; address Care American Express, 11 Rue Scribe, Paris, France, as they will forward my mail to me wherever I may be. When I think how far from my loved ones and friends I am, I grow quite melancholy and get the 'blues.' I telephoned the Cotton Club from Paris and talked to Clarence Robinson, and also I called up Small's Paradise from Berlin that cost \$75 for six minutes. But it is really worth it to hear the voice of people that you know when you are so far away from home."

Miss McKinney is touring Europe under the personal direction of William Morris, Jr., Mayfair Theatre Bldg., New York City.

## ANOTHER COLORED FILM TO COME SOON

NEW YORK, Feb. 26—(CNS)—The all-colored cast idea has stepped from the stage to the screen and there is to be an all-colored production called "Hallelujah" by Jackie Young, now a singer and dancer at the Hot Feet Club on Houston street, has been cast for the lead.

## NEGRO NEWSREEL HAS ACTUALLY BEEN LAUNCHED

Two-Reel Comedies and  
Up-to-Minute News  
Reels Are Stressed

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—At last it seems that after many attempts a successful motion picture and Negro Newsreel Company is to be launched in the west. The Lincoln Talking Pictures Company, headed by Spencer Williams and L. Ford, has departed from the usual procedure of stock selling and is financing itself. These men have secured equipment and engaged a national release agency. Sam Kramer, wealthy West Coast producer, is connected with the company as agent to guard their financial interests. Local colored citizens have already begun to express confidence in it, as not a nickel's worth of stock has been offered for sale, although its promoters admit that sometime in the future, after it has made good, a few stockholders may be admitted. The first Negro newsreel has been completed and will be released with the first picture, a two-reeler, which is being filmed now. Iron-bound contracts cement the agreement between these enterprising young colored men and the white distributing corporation, so that they will be forced to market the company's productions as diligently and as thoroughly as they do those of the white companies.

### Work for Negroes

Most of the two-reelers, which are clean-cut comedies of a nature destined to furnish a vehicle for good acting, were written by Williams, formerly star and scenario writer of Christie's Studios. It was his scenarizing of "Melancholy Dame," "Music Hath Charms," "Off in the Silly Night" and other

er Octavus Roy Cohen stories that gave the public the first all-colored movie-tones filmed here. He is well educated, a college graduate and a veteran of the silent films. Ford, his business partner, is one of the liveliest members of local business circles. For some time he operated the first colored auto insurance offices, building up a successful business, still conducted by his former associate, William Graham.

Local citizens have been skeptical of all recent promotions here, as a score or more of real estate subdivisions, land companies, oil syndicates, steamship companies and country clubs have gone on the rocks with their hard-earned investments, but this venture seems to the majority to have struck the keynote and to be laying its cards on the table.

## BIG MOVING PICTURE INDUSTRY FOR NEGRO ACTORS HEADED BY VINCENT LONGO IN PROCESS OF ORGANIZATION

\$1,000,000 Hollywood of South, All Colored Cast;  
Mr. Longo Interviews Prominent  
Negroes of Louisiana

What promises to give the greatest incentive to Negro theatrical expansion than anything Negro artists have yet tried, is being organized by Mr. Vincent Longo, a prominent white business man of New Orleans. In the form of a Motion Picture Producing Corporation which will be the Negro Hollywood of the South where every picture will present an all colored cast.

A representative of the Voice interviewed Mr. Longo in his office during the week of August 16th, where he explained in detail the gigantic project which is to be operated on the broad scale capitalized in a million dollars. Mr. Longo will be in position to attract the best Negro talent in music, song, drama etc; from all sections of the United States and from every part of the world, until as from a great fountain of artistic knowledge the Negro will have an outlet for his superior gifts as a theatrical performer.

This vast project when perfected, will require thousands of colored actors, stage helpers, carpenters, decorators, an extensive publicity department and sundry activities all performed by colored men and women.

Thus it can be readily seen that its far-reaching operations will advance wonderfully the economic situation of the Negro, particularly in the South.

Mr. Longo, in order to introduce himself and his moving picture producing industry, to the colored people of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana has, for the past several years, promoted and successfully staged colored beauty contests drawing his subjects from the whole state of Louisiana, awarding appropriate prizes to the winning beauties of respective cities, as Miss New Orleans, Miss Shreveport, Miss Alexandria etc, and the beauty representing the entire State or Miss Louisiana.

All this promotion work has been carried on by colored men working under Mr. Longo's direction, he bearing all expenses personally.

Mr. Longo is satisfied with the results, which have meant to him a loss financially speaking, but as a medium through which to meet and explain to the leading Negroes of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana his bigger project, he has gained what dollars and cents cannot buy namely: The interest and confidence of the substantial Negro

citizenry of the entire State of Louisiana to the effect that he, Mr. Longo, is no four-flusher, but is sincere in his efforts to assist the Negro in developing his theatrical talent through his producing picture corporation until he shall have proved to the South and to the world that he, the Negro, as an actor in song, music, drama etc., has no superior, predicting also that through the medium of his producing project, Negro theatrical artists will be so in demand, that wherever theatrical circuits are to be found, there will the race performers be booked to carry on in reality in contrast to the clumsy imitations that are now produced by white artists such as Amos and Andy, Al Jolson and others; who, when they are at their best, can but grossly misrepresent what is born in the very bones of Negroes viz: their natural inimitable gifts in music, song, drama, minstrelsy; and in the latter, the Negro, though thoroughly imitated by white actors, has never been surpassed.

**COLORED ACTORS IN NEW PICTURE**  
*Whip 12-10-31*

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Oct. 7. — Filmed, smoothly and with untusual good fortune "Arrowsmith," the big new United Artists picture finished this week. Clarence Brooks made his final shots on Sunday, the big village scene with 200 colored players on Tuesday with a few shots up till Friday. Josephine Brown was in some of the earlier scenes as a native bride. Patsy Hunter, Ernestine Porter and a number of local performers worked in the big scenes. The preview will disclose it to be one of the year's best according to prediction. Ronald Colman and Helen Hayes are costars.

**To Make Negro Films**  
*Orleans*  
NEW ORLEANS, La., Oct. 19.— There is being organized here an entire Negro directorate and casts. This concern plans to produce talking pictures, both drama and comedy, with the idea of exhibiting them in all theatres throughout the country. The organizer and present manager of the corporation is Vincent Longo, 427 Carondelet street.

**BIG MOVING PICTURE INDUSTRY FOR NEGRO ACTORS HEADED BY VINCENT LONGO IN PROCESS OF ORGANIZATION**  
*National Negro Voice*  
**\$1,000,000 Hollywood of South, All Colored Cast; Mr. Longo Interviews Prominent Negroes of Louisiana**

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**U. S. Films On African Life Scored**  
*Courier*  
*Pittsburgh*  
*12-26-31*

By MAX E. MURPHY.  
(Translated from the German "Schoener Zukunft")

PRAGUE, Czecho-Slovakia, Dec. 24.—At the present time in the German and Austrian theaters the American so-called "expedition films" are again being shown. William L. Kristl recently referred to them in an article in the "German Film Magazine" (Munich), as being characterized chiefly by "childlike bluff" and "unusual bad taste."

There is little or no truth in them; there is a clever technique about them that precludes naturalness. Hardly one of them is without savage shooting of defenseless animals, and even the unscrupulous destroying of animals much after the custom of the prairie years in the Wild West half a century ago.

The Negroes in the American films are either ridiculous or horrifying; they must have furnished the object for sorry wit for the film producers on many occasions. The actual everyday life of the Negroes is never shown. We see always the mythical "feasts" and "dances," gruesome results of tribal warfare—all of which has no foundation in fact, but is rather the hypothetical portrayal of the producer's imagination.

No bonafide American expedition film is without its "sensation." However, in an American made African film which was shown in the theaters during the past year, the sensation was the laceration of a Negro by an attacking lion; it is not yet decided as to whether this particular scene is genuine or faked.

In one of these films now being shown in many theaters, "Ingagi," the public is hoaxed into believing that a gorilla ravishes a Negro woman. This alleged genuine scene is of course a deception; the wild-behaving gorilla is a masked film impersonator.

Another thing, in this film artificial animals are brought forth as "new discoveries." Productions of this kind in which such meaningless orgies are depicted are a great danger to the culture-film.

"Any disparagement of the culture-film is at the same time a depreciation of a means of popular education—all of which is of extraordinary significance: Once the public becomes aware of this swindle, it will no longer credit the legitimacy of serious films."

**CUBANS RESENT U. S. MOVIE WHICH DEPICTS THEM AS INFERIOR**  
*Argos*

HAVANA, Cuba, Dec. 23.—Sham resentment has been aroused here by the moving picture, "Cuban Love Song." The degraded way in which the Cubans are depicted in the picture is given as the cause. The Moving Picture Exhibitors' Union of Havana resolved last Friday to boycott all films of the American producers, Metro Goldwyn-Myer, until the picture starring Lawrence Tibbett and Lupe Velez be withdrawn from the market. The picture is now being shown in the United States. *12-25-31*

**Protests Are Heard.**  
Many indignant protests concerning the picture have been presented to Secretary of the Interior Octavio G. Zubizarreta in the last few days by prominent Cubans who have recently returned from New York, where they saw the film. The government has been asked to take immediate action against further exhibition of "The Cuban Love Song," which Cubans declare depicts the island as an uncivilized country where the natives are half-clothed and bare-footed, and magistrates impose absurd penalties on foreigners.

Officials of Metro-Goldwyn say they have not as yet received notification from the Secretary of the Interior that the Cuban Government had intervened in the matter.

Picture Films, etc.,

## A black and white photograph of a smiling man in a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He is looking towards the camera. In the top right corner, there is a small cartoon illustration. The cartoon shows a man in a cap and uniform holding a megaphone, a woman in a swimsuit standing with her hands on her hips, and a camera on a tripod. The background of the photograph is dark and textured.

**Negro Motion Picture Studio**  
**Meeting With Success Here**  
*American News 1-20-32*  
*New York N.Y.*  
**Company Unknown to Many in Greater New**  
**York Shows Progress and Will Release**  
**Latest Picture, "The Crimson Fog"**

Paragon Pictures Corporation—for activities to the places in the South such is the name—started out from where they continue to create a demand for their pictures. They now competing with the powerful interests in the game, but confining their feel that the experimental stage has been passed and their latest release

The company has its own studio building, facing on two streets in the heart of Jamaica, L. I., where they long ago installed sound recording equipment, microphones, lighting with a capacity of one hundred thousand candle power, developing laboratory, and everything else that go to make up a progressive organization with but one thought in mind—to make bigger and better Negro pictures. At present all "takes" are made on a fifty-five foot sound stage. The company plans to build on adjoining property a one hundred foot sound stage, thereby competing with some of the best. The company also owns the ground to be used for this purpose.

Unlike many other Negro producers that fell by the wayside, Paragon Pictures is listed in such well known journals devoted to the trade as Livingstone's International Casting Directory, Directors' Annual and Guide, Film Daily Year Book, etc. "The Crimson Fog" is a mystery story which weaves around a colored soldier in the late World's War and a lovely girl who became a nurse and in the service of the Red Cross runs into her romantic hero in a French hospital.

In this case it is well to recall that the late Alex Rogers, one of the creators of the successful Williams and Walker shows, for years supplied material to a number of big white acts and also heard his own songs sung by Sophie Tucker and a host of other white stars of Broadway. The motion pictures of today call for a great deal of skill and imagination upon the part of the producers

## Plan New Negro Film



# Soviet Seeks Negroes to Make Film of Conditions Here

*Under the news*

Picture Will Be Called "Black and White," Without the Buffoonery and Sentimentality of Others of Its Kind

*3-9-33*

Because of the widespread interest in the American Negro in the U. S. S. R., Mr. Ford explains, the Meschrabpom company proposes to produce a photoplay which will portray realistically the life of the Negro people in America. The scenario for this film, to be known as "Black and White," is devoid of sentimentality as well as of buffoonery, and traces the development of the Negro people in this country, their work, their play, their progress, their difficulties.

# TO PRODUCE MOVIE OF RACE PROGRESS

LOS ANGELES, Cal., Mar. 10. (By ANP)—Co-operating with Van S. Trefon, Dea. T. and O. B. Tilling, host, of the International Motion Picture Productions, Joseph Bass, publisher of the California Eagle, is to produce a talking motion picture which will depict the progress of the Negro race. It is announced that more than 10,000 persons will appear in the picture, which will be shown to white and colored audiences throughout the United States.

A few weeks since the Department of Commerce, through the office of James A. Jackson, made public a statement to the effect that there are 303 theatres in the United States according to a recent tabulation made by the theatre interests. This statement was in error and Mr. Jackson informs us that the total number of such houses should read 596. The majority of these more than a half thousand theatres sustained by racial patronage are straight film houses although a few intersperse vaudeville and play road shows.

## Harlem Is Heaven Has A Brilliant World Premiere At The Renaissance Theatre

With a glittering display of pictures and electric signs, Harlem had its first World Premiere on Friday night when the management of the Renaissance Theatre released with a big splash Lincoln Pictures production, "Harlem is Heaven," starring Bill (Bojangles) Robinson. Despite the rain crowds poured into the theatre and by midnight the place was packed. know shortcake ain't bad. Best wishes to all. Coposetically yours, Bill Robinson.

At 22.15, Mr. Vere E. Johns, radio editor of the New York Age, who had been asked to act as master of ceremonies, briefly welcomed the audience and started the show on its way. A hilariously funny Mickey Mouse cartoon, a thrilling Van Dine mystery thriller and Ruth Etting singing delectable songs in a clever short were each a feature in itself and highly entertaining. Mr. Johns then introduced Bob Williams, one of the Harlem's cleverest entertainers and he kept the audience in good spirits while he introduced celebrated artists from the audience. First there was Jules Bledsoe who got a big hand, took a bow and ex-

orted the audience to support pictures like "Harlem is Heaven." Then Eubie Blake (who is responsible for the musical end of the picture), Walter Richardson, Johnny Hudgins, Andy Razaf, Enid Rafael, Rose McClendon, Ada Ward and Wells, Mordecai and Taylor each took a bow and received hearty applause. The big surprise was the famous Stepin Fetchit who was given an enthusiastic reception.

The feature, "Harlem is Heaven" followed and it was quite evident that the audience followed it with keen interest and enjoyment and they loudly applauded it at the close. During the showing of the picture an appropriate halt was made and four of the players who had hurried over between shows at the Cotton Club were presented to the gathering by Vere E. Johns and each received an ovation, particularly pretty Anise Boyer. They were Miss Alma Smith, Miss Anise Boyer, Jimmy Baskette, Henry Wessels and Bob Sawyer.

A telegram from Bill Robinson away in Portland, Ore., ran thus: "Manager, Renaissance Theatre—Hope your house is packed tonight and if the audience likes me in this picture tell them I'll try and be better next time. The reason I gave "Money Johnson" such a tough fight over "Jean" was because she looked like a piece of strawberry shortcake and you

Banton, Mrs. Harry Humphrey, Miss Winifred Humphrey, Miss Gloria Harding, J. Walter Price, E. A. Clark, George Shute, L. Baynard Whitney, Frank Byrd, Ted Yates, Maurice Dancer, Ed. G. Perry, J. Wayne Burrell, Willard Howe, Charles Yates, Jack Goldberg, R. B. Gilbert, Louis Goldberg and many others.

"Harlem is Heaven" is now having a limited run at the Renaissance Theatre and will not be shown at any other in New York. A review of the picture appears elsewhere.

## MICHEAUX DEFEATED IN RULING

*Amsterdam News*  
5-18-32  
Movie Producer Sued  
for Accounting on  
"The Exile"

Shadows of the much-publicized "The Exile," all Negro talking picture, flitted across the walls of the Manhattan Supreme Court last Wednesday when Frank Schiffman, manager of the Lafayette Theatre, and Oscar Micheaux, veteran movie producer, clashed before Justice Peter Schmuck, as their attorneys sought to straighten out the tangled affairs of the Fayette Pictures, Inc., creators of the disputed film.

The theatre manager, who charges that he advanced \$10,000 for the original production of "The Exile" and supplemented the amount with several other cash contributions, emerged victorious from the court duel when Supreme Court Justice Schmuck ordered Micheaux to give an accounting of the financial state of the Fayette Pictures, Inc., of which he is president, and to return all money unlawfully withheld from the corporation. Schiffman is secretary and vice-president of the film company and Leo Brecher, white, head of the theatre chain of that name is treasurer.

Charges and counter charges of misappropriation of funds, infringement of copyrights, and attempted removal of officers were bandied back and forth as the difficulties behind

the creation of the talking picture were brought out by attorneys for the amusement executives. Schiffman was represented by Attorney Joseph B. Finkelstein of 285 Madison avenue, while the law firm of Edwards and Allen, 200 West 135th street represented Micheaux.

The movie producer admitted that Schiffman had advanced a sum estimated as enough to produce a picture from a story written by Micheaux, but declared that the actual production of the picture, which the author also directed, was almost three times the sum advanced. Because of this and the expenses incurred in marketing "The Exile," Micheaux charged that he not only was unable to pay the theatre manager the 25 per cent of the gross receipts from the picture but was practically bankrupted himself by the venture.

When he protested his inability to pay, he continued, Schiffman is alleged to have called a meeting of the stockholders and attempted to remove Micheaux as an officer and director of the corporation. The theatre manager denied all of Micheaux's charges and accused the producer of misappropriating funds of the corporation to his personal use and with secretly copyrighting "The Exile" in his own name. Schiffman also accused Micheaux of signing and cashing \$3,500 worth of checks belonging to the corporation.

Since the release of the disputed picture, Micheaux has produced two other all-Negro talking pictures. They are "Velled Aristocrats," based on the novel of that name by Charles W. Chestnutt, and "Ten Minutes Live," one of the "Harlem After Midnight" series written and directed by the producer.

## ACTORS TO SAIL FOR RUSSIA ON JUNE 14

Bon Voyage Party for  
Group Going Abroad  
Held in Harlem.

HUGHES, POET,  
AMONG PLAYERS

To Make Film of Negro Life in Soviet.

By L. BAYNARD WHITNEY  
NEW YORK.—(WNS)—Dignified by the presence of Nancy Cunard,

titled Englishwoman, black and white Communists and their guests held a bon voyage party for about a dozen of the 25 colored players who are leaving for Russia Tuesday night, June 14, to make a sound movie of Negro life in America, under the sponsorship of the Soviet government.

The party will sail on the Europa five minutes past midnight and are due to arrive at Moscow June 28. The party, and dance, was held at Unique Colony Circle, 254 West 135th Street.

**Something New**  
"Black and White" is the title of the picture, which will be produced in English, German and Russian, by the Meschrabpom Film Company of Moscow. The great German movie director, Eisenstein, will direct the play, it is reported, assisted by Lovett Fort-Whiteman. The picture is intended to portray the Negro as he really is, in contrast to the types found in most American films.

Communist Russia will attempt, through this film, to tell the world the story of the American Negro, from 1850 to 1932. It is described as an historical photoplay drama, showing the Negro's suffering, exploitation, persecution, and his great achievements in the life of America since before slavery time.

**Langston Hughes to Go**  
The party is to consist of not less than 20 and not more than 25, and will include Langston Hughes, poet; Matt Crawford and Loran Miller. Those present at the bi-racial dancing party, given in their honor before they embark, were Henry Lee Moon and Theodore Poston of the Amsterdam News; Sylvia Garner, daughter of the Rev. A. C. Garner of Grace Congregational Church; Louise Thompson, secretary of the committee.

**Pay Own Fares**  
L. O. Alberga of the Young Negro's Co-operative League; Gordon, singer and actor, and Percy Cunard, who is in America writing an anthology on the Negro; Theodore R. Bassett, translator; Allen McKenzie, and Thurston Lewis and Wayland Rudd, actors. Hughes, Crawford and Miller are reported en route to New York from California.

The members of the party will be on a salary as soon as they reach Russia. Special arrangement will be made for their transportation to Moscow after they land at Bremen, Germany, on June 20. From Bremen, the route will follow to Berlin, to Helsinki, Finland, then to Leningrad, with a special escort from there to Moscow.

The travelers will pay their own fare on the Europa, with a few exceptions, it is reported.

TWENTY-TWO Harlem Negroes have started for Moscow to take part in a moving picture dealing with Negro life on a cotton plantation. Of course the Harlem Negroes know all about life on a cotton plantation and should be a great help to the writers. *Maeen Telling*

Theaters - 1932

Picture Films, etc.

Leave for U.S.S.R. to Work on Soviet Film

Daily Worker



Part of a group of American Negro workers and intellectuals who left Monday night for the Soviet Union to participate in the making of an historical film of Negro life in America. Left to right, front—W. A. Domingo, chairman; Constance W. White, Dorothy West, Juanita Lewis, Louise Thompson, Sylvia Garner, Mildred Jones, L. O. Alberga. Top—Wayland Rudd, Henry Lee Moon, McNary Lewis, Theodore Piston, Allan McKenzie, Homer Smith and Harold Williams. The group also includes Langston Hughes, Negro poet and dramatist.

EUFAULA, ALA.

"UNCLE TOM" IN RUSSIA

By way of The Montgomery Advertiser we learn that "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which thrilled our northern neighbors in years just preceding the War Between the States, is now presented in Russia. Commenting on the project, The Advertiser editor says:

Close your eyes and attempt to picture little Eva, the plantation child of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," addressing that impish Topsy in Russian! Or, one better, just try to visualize a scene in which Topsy answers in Russian!

The Mobile Register has tried and failed. That is, The Register is inclined to smile at a "Topsy a la Russia" scene in a country where negroes are as numerous as are Eskimos in the Alaskan Blackbelt. But natives of the Soviet Union have been thrilled by Harriet Beecher Stowe's abolitionistic production as were folks the other side of the Mason-Dixon line before the War Between the States. The Register says and continues:

"Little Eva, alas, is a changed girl since Moscow got hold of her. She doesn't go in for delicate sweetness

any more. Instead, she is tom-boyish and robust to the point of being a woman athlete. And at the end of the play she doesn't die, death-bed scene being, apparently, too middle-class.

"The darkies in the Russian version sing melodies more like 'The Song of the Volga Boatman,' than 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,' but this is as nothing compared to the fact that the Soviets have eliminated the famous ice-and-bloodhounds scene.

"It is difficult to imagine anything more incongruous, unless, of course, it is a Hollywood actress playing a Russian princess of the old regime." "Uncle Tom's Cabin," even to conscientious abolitionists, would have been a rather colorless drama, one would imagine, without the deathbed scene and the ice-and-bloodhound episode. And in Soviet Russia where slavery was of entirely different structure it does not seem possible that the play could be a strong box office attraction.

"Uncle Tom's Cabin" might have served its purpose in bringing before the northern public conditions which might or might not have existed in the south at the time. But in these days and in communistic Russia, where white characters are grotesque caricatures, in contrast to the Negroes, most of whom are shown in a favorable light

entertaining and educational productions for people to be forced to sit through a presentation of "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

NO HEAVEN FOR  
EVA IN SOVIET  
UNCLE TOM

Russian Dramatization  
Reeks with Heresy.

NEW YORK CITY—(CNS)—According to recent visitors to Moscow Soviet children are being regaled with a modified interpretation of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in which Eliza escapes with her child from Haley's bloodhounds, Topsy cutting up her queer capers, and Uncle Tom sold on the auction block at New Orleans and subsequently flogged to death by order of Simon Legree; but there is rank heresy in the Soviet version of the play. To start with, little Eva's name is changed to Dora, and she is depicted as quite a different girl from the frail, spiritual being American children have come to know. Far from being delicate, she is hale and almost tomboyish on the Soviet stage. Her conversations with her father and Uncle Tom about God and religion are all eliminated, for Soviet children must not be exposed to anything which might serve to stimulate their interest in religious things.

Eliza Escapes

Apart from the changes considered necessary for political reasons, the Soviet version involves a number of innovations disappointing to the American brought up in the tradition of the melodramatic road show. Fancy, for example, an "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in which one is deprived of the privilege of seeing Eliza cross the

And the Soviet heresy extends even further. Topsy is described as Eliza's daughter, and it is with Topsy and not with her beloved little Harry that the quadroon flees before the slave trader. Little Eva (Dora) having continued to live, is in position to call at Legree's plantation in quest of Uncle Tom. Thus, it is she instead of George who is on hand when the dead slave is brought in. The reason for this sort of presentation of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is not far to seek. The play, of course, provides ample material to illustrate the way in which the Negro race was treated not so many years ago in America.

Mrs. Stowe has always been charged in the South with exaggeration but she is mild when compared with the producers of the Moscow version of the stage play. Nearly all the white characters are grotesque caricatures, in contrast to the Negroes, most of whom are shown in a favorable light.

# Announce Players For Soviet Picture

Cast Includes Wayland Rudd, Taylor Gordon  
and Other Professional and Amateur  
Actors—To Sail Tuesday Night

In response to an invitation from the Meschrabpom Film Corporation of Moscow a party of twenty professional and amateur players will sail next Tuesday at midnight aboard the North German Lloyd liner Europa for the U. S. S. R., where they will participate in production of the sound film "Black and White," a portrayal of Negro life in America.

Wayland Rudd, who won new laurels in "Bloodstream," after having been cast in "Porgy" and other Broadway successes; Taylor Gordon, writer, concert singer and member of the cast of Heywood Brown's revue, "Shoot the Works"; Sylvia Garner, who played with Ethel Barrymore in "Scarlet Sister Mary"; Juanita Lewis, singer and dramatic reader, and Thurston Lewis, star of "Ham's Daughter," are among professionals included in the cast. Others who will participate in the film are Allen McKenzie, T. R. Poston, Louise Thompson, George Sample, Mildred Jones, Dorothy West, A. L. Alberga, Mollie Lewis, T. R. Bassett, Constance White, Frank C. Montero, Katherine Jenkins, and Loren Miller of Los Angeles, Matthew Crawford of Berkeley, Calif., and Lloyd Patterson of Westfield, N. J. Henry Lee Moon of The Amsterdam News will accompany the party and will write a series of articles on the Soviet Union for this and other newspapers.

The party will spend from four to five months in the U. S. S. R. filming the new screen play, which aims to present a realistic and historical picture of the Negro race in this country. The best technical and production talent in the moving picture industry of the Soviet Union has been secured for the direction and production of the film, which the Meschrabpom Film Corporation has expressed the hope will reveal the Negro to the workers of that country and will knit a closer cultural bond between the peoples of the two countries.

W. A. Domingo is chairman of the co-operating committee which has completed the arrangements in this country. Louise Thompson is corresponding secretary. The group of sponsors include Bessye Bearden, George S. Counts, Malcolm Cowley, H. W. L. Dana, William H. Davis, Romeo Dougherty, Waldo Frank, Cecil Hope, Langston Hughes, Rose McClendon, Edna Thomas, Charles Rymford Walker, John H. Hammond, Jr., Harry Allan Potamkin, Will Voderer, Harold Williams and Hugo Gellert. Under the auspices of this committee the company was tendered a bon voyage cabaret party on Friday night at the Green and Gold Studio. Nearly 200 guests attended to bid farewell to the group. The League of Struggle for Negro Rights will sponsor a similar entertainment at the Bronze Studio, 227 Lenox avenue, Friday night.

# "Movie King" Of North Carolina Began Career With Nickleodeon

Has Owned Twenty  
Two Movie Theatres;

Has Three Now

By XENIA  
Journal and Guide Theatrical Editor

DURHAM, N. C.—The "movie king" of North Carolina.

That is what people of this city call Frederick "King" Watkins. He is the owner of the only colored theatre now operating here but he gets his title for far more than that.

Years and years ago, so long that he doesn't care to talk about it, Frederick K. Watkins started out in the amusement business with a nickleodeon in a small town in Mississippi. In connection with that venture, he prefers to remain silent, with but a reminiscent chuckle as his memory goes back to those crude days when the motion picture industry was in its infancy.

Owns Three Houses

Since that early venture, way back somewhere between 1900 and 1910, Frederick has owned 22 movie theatres, playing silent pictures, vaudeville shows and, now, talking pictures. At present he is the owner of three houses, the Wonderland in this city; the Dixie in High Point, N. C.; and the Majestic at Martinsville, Va.

His first venture in the amusement business in this part of the country came in 1912, when he operated the Rex theatre in this city. This house showed silent pictures only. This early start is what gave Mr. Watkins his title of "the movie king," since at that time he was a pioneer in the field.

He started his second theatre in Winston-Salem in 1916, the Dunbar. Then followed in steady succession the High Point house in 1917; one at South Boston, Va., in 1917; Chapel Hill; Raleigh; Reidsville; Martinsville, Va.; Columbia; Spartanburg, S. C.; Wilson; Goldsboro and one at Atlantic City, N. J.

Colorful Experiences

The movie king has had a long, wide and varied career in his field as amusement purveyor. Perhaps the colorful experiences of operating a

nickleodeon in the Delta region inspired him on to further and greater achievements—he doesn't say. He did, however, give up the Mississippi venture after a while, to open the Majestic theatre in Muskogee, Oklahoma, in 1919.

The movie king's Oklahoma ventures included the operating of the Royal theatre at Tulsa and an air dome and open air park at Boley, Negro town. At the time of the Jack Johnson-Jim Jeffries prize fight in 1910; he was operating the theatre at Muskogee. He tells

that is what people of this city call Frederick "King" Watkins. He is the owner of the only colored theatre now operating here but he gets his title for far more than that.

Is Touring Now

Mr. Watkins is at present leaving his three theatres in the hands of three managers, while he is touring this section of the country with his own moving picture machine operating films depicting the "Life and Times of George Washington." This is a picture being shown to schools as a feature of the bi-centennial celebration of the former president.

The movie king acts as his own



F. "KING" WATKINS

Films Own Pictures;  
Charged \$1 A Head  
For One Show

contact man with this feature, making appointments and gaining inter-views with school executives, white and colored for the showing of the picture. For white schools, he uses white operators, and for colored schools the colored men are employed.

He has sensed a trend in the motion picture industry for the "visual education" idea, which embodies the exhibiting of educational films to schools and churches. Briefly expressed, the idea is to "learn by seeing," educators believing this method to have definite values.

Will Film Picture

Along this line, the movie king will film this summer at Durham and Raleigh, a talking picture on the life and times of Crispus Attucks, Negro martyr of the Revolutionary War. This picture, which will use colored actors, directors, authors and cameramen, is to be financed by the movie king and will be booked and shown at Negro schools and other organizations this coming fall.

Mr. Watkins thinks nothing at all of occasionally filming his own pictures, using Negro talent throughout, on phases of Negro life. These films he exhibits in his own three houses. He plans to continue this feature, along with the visual education idea.

An Experienced Operator

He himself knows all the intricacies and craftsmanship of the motion picture art, having been an operator, even in the days when the projection machines were turned by hand, a slow and wearisome process. Now, he has kept abreast of the times, learning how to operate the latest and most complicated talking picture machinery.

He makes his residence in this city, is married and has no children. He is a Past Grand Esteemed Lecturing Knight and Grand Traveling Deputy of the Elks; a 33rd degree Mason; a Pythian and an Odd Fellow. He is a member of the White Rock Baptist Church here and maintains now and has in the past extensive connections with the business interests of this city.

## The Black King Showing Here

Reviewer Says That Picture  
Is Best Produced by  
and for Negroes

The much-heralded all-Negro talking picture, "The Black King," is being shown on the screen at the Lafayette Theatre this week, and although the cast is rather superior, the picture itself falls a trifle short of expectations. Written by Donald Heywood and directed by "Bud" Polard, the cast includes such names as Vivian Baber, Knolly Mitchell, A. B. De Comathiere, Lorenzo Tucker and Mary Jane Watkins.

De Comathiere in the leading role is excellently cast as a Southern preacher who has hopes of establishing a United States of Africa, and thereby urging all Negro-Americans to return to their native land. After colorful demonstrations in Chicago and New York, his plans suddenly fail (his crookedness having been discovered by opponents) and he, with two "trusty" followers, is forced to return to Mississippi on foot.

Vivian Baber has charm, beauty and ability to her credit as the much-loved Mary Lou, and although she had comparatively few scenes in which to display her wonderful emotional powers, Miss Baber was indeed as lovable and sensational as any figure this reviewer has seen flashed on the Negro screen.

Possessed of a modulated voice, her diction was perfect, and no other of our actresses has seemed quite as at home before the merciless camera. Lorenzo Tucker played his usual debonnaire role enhanced by his ability, too, to speak his lines clearly.

Knolly Mitchell in the role of Mary Lou's lover was disappointing. With a tendency to be over-dramatic, he seemed not at all sure of himself.

Except for a few inconsistencies in regards to time, places, costume and a few other minor details, "The Black King" is easily the best Negro picture to date. More money has obviously been spent on scenery, props, costumes and sound effects than any other production, which, of course, probably accounts for the satisfying results.

Holding forth on the stage is the very personable Lucky Millinder and his band, who is supported by none other than that dancing marvel, "Peg Leg" Bates. Others constituting a swift revue include Shelton Brooks,

Three Rythm Kings, Gallie de Gaston. The Five Clouds of Joy, and the dancingest gals in town, the Careyes.—W. C. Chase.

Theaters-1932

Picture Films, etc.



*Chicago Defender 9-17-32*  
**POSTPONES SOVIET TALKIE**—The above picture shows some of the actors and actresses who had gathered in Moscow, Russia, for the filming of a talking picture, "Black and White," which was to show life among "white and colored workers in the United States." The picture will not be made this year, it has just been announced. Among the players taken to Russia for the photoplay were 22 Americans of the Race. The picture will be made next year. Some casting for the film had been done, however, before the group left for an extended tour of the soviet union.

## SNELSON REVEALS "INSIDE" STORY OF NOTED MOVIE CITY

*Chicago 9-24-32*  
*Pittsburgh Pa.*

**With Few Exceptions, Negroes Get Only Small Parts  
And "Smaller" Pay—Race Performers Ofttimes  
Exploited by Bookers—Names of Few Ever Reach  
Public.**

By FLOYD G. SNELSON

**HOLLYWOOD, Cal., Sept. 22**—The Negro in Hollywood is not merely a novice, but a sad nonentity, in speaking of the part he plays in motion pictures, with but one or two exceptions. Out of the several hundred colored people who are employed each year in the various studios, it is deplorable to note that scarcely a dozen earn enough money to make a living. After a careful survey, for a pithy salary, oftentimes parts has been learned that our people that would command huge sums have been cajoled, hood-winked, played by white actors. and exploited by directors and Many talented people have been booking agents into playing parts, and given no consideration in the bill

ing, and in many instances, cast in the background without even showing their faces. Much of the music heard in many sensational screen successes is the artistry of the Negro musician, and it is never known. Their names are withheld there is no credit given whatsoever by the publicity they are paid, just a few dollars, not enough to pay their telephone bill. Yes, they accept it,—glad of the opportunity to make a few paltry dollars, while the producers are coining millions each year from their efforts.

The reason is this: names mean money in Hollywood. Your name is first spelled in pennies, then nickels, dimes, quarters, dollars, hundreds, thousands and then millions. The Negro has hardly reached the hundred mark. They pay you what some Negroes term good money—fifty dollars for a thousand dollars worth of talent—keep your name a mystery and make you think you are a star. They have what they call artist's representatives, who barter your talent with the directors, like the cowboys and Indians trade cattle at a trading post. These brokers gain distinction in Hollywood by being able to supply anything, that is what they call "type" of Negro, under the sun for the scenario that is required at any price necessary, regardless how low. Of course, he will try to

get as large a figure as possible, so that his cut-in, which might be anywhere from 5 to 25 per cent, may be as big as possible.

Ninety per cent of the Negroes employed in pictures in Hollywood receive about \$10 per day, and those who take great pride as representing themselves as movie stars frequently are in this class. They live constantly in hopes that a "break" will finally come. These poor \$10 per day actors scarcely work four days out of a week. Should they happen to secure a month's work at one time, it is a miracle, and the chances are they won't enjoy that privilege again during the year.

I find that these disgusting conditions are brought about to a great extent by the colored actors themselves. They ramble about the studios, oftentimes making themselves a despicable nuisance, and if by chance, they do get a word with the director or his office boy, they undersell their services, making slurring remarks about one another, with the hope of gaining favor, and in most events lose the respect of the studio and its executives.

This so-called type of Negro that is in demand in Hollywood, I find is usually rough, burly and obnoxious, and of the lowest possible type of colored person, to be found in the dives and gambling resorts of the slums. Many of them leave a set at the studio and scurry to a "juice joint" or a crap game, and are penniless before nightfall. I realize that this indictment does not apply to all such performers, as there are numbers of well meaning men and women of the better class to be found.

Another decadent evil, to my way of thinking, which is truly a disgrace to the race, is the fact that when some fortunate Negro happens to "edge-in" to a little favor at a certain studio, he is the worst task master of his own people they have to contend with. He often goes so far as to tell the white employer just what handicaps to place in the paths of his brothers and what burdens to place upon their shoulders. He is often a typical "Esau, who sold his brethren for a mess of porridge." Of course, this not only happens in the Hollywood studios, but in many walks of life. Beware of that Negro, who asks or demands sacrifices of you, on the pretense of said sacrifice being for your own good. He means it for his own scheme, because he had seen "Hallelujah" and other Negro films.

The situation at Hollywood should be cleared up, but it will never be cleared up by broke, penniless and hungry actors and would-be actors, hovering around the studios, willing to take anything, to catch the

crumbs from the table.

Hollywood needs high class, intelligent, self-respecting men and women, who possess fine qualities of character, deportment and integrity. People who are welcomed upon the lots because of their serenity and affable competence

## SEEK TO PRODUCE BOSS NEGRO FILM

*Chicago 10-14-32*  
**Moon and Poston, in  
N. Y., Repeat Slander**

Henry Lee Moon and Theodore L. Poston arrived in New York yesterday and proceeded to spread more slanders about the Soviet Union. Moon and Poston were members of the group of Negro writers and actors that went to the Soviet Union recently to act in a motion picture, "Black and White," to be produced by the Mezharabprom.

When the picture was postponed till next spring, because of the scenario and technical difficulties, Moon and Poston then began to spread the slander that the Soviet Union wanted to please American imperialism by canceling the entire film project. This was decisively denied by the majority of the group, which included Louise Thompson, Langston Hughes and Loren Miller.

Now Moon and Poston, on their arrival in New York, claim that "plans are under way" to produce a "Black and White" film in the United States. By this report they want to make the Negro masses believe that the jim-crow white bosses in the United States would permit the production of the same film; that, according to their slanders, will not be produced in the Soviet Union, where all race oppression has been abolished.

Even if a film by the name of "Black and White" were produced, Negro workers know that it will not reveal the real tortures and oppression to which the Negro race has been and is being subjected in the United States, but will sugarcoat and hide the whole situation, as it was done in the film "Hallelujah," where the oppression of Negro workers on the plantation was painted as a paradise instead of the hell it really is. Incidentally, Moon and Poston reported they met a director in Berlin who was interested in their scheme, because he had seen "Hallelujah" and other Negro films.

OCT 13 1932

## Film Troupers, Home, Predict Russian Crisis

Leaders of Negro Company  
Tell of Food Shortage;  
Returned Without Picture

20 Actors Still on Tour

Stalin Refused to Hear Their  
Protests Over Treatment

Henry Lee Moon and Theodore L. Poston, two highly articulate members of the Negro group which visited Russia last June to make a motion picture reflecting Negro life in America, returned here yesterday aboard the Hamburg-American liner St. Louis with a glowing tale of life among the Soviets.

Reporters for "The New York Amsterdam News" and the Associated Negro Press, respectively, Mr. Moon and Mr. Poston turned upon Russia the eyes of trained observers. They attempted to interview Stalin. Thwarted in this, they spoke to members of the Comintern, or Communist International. They traveled widely in the Soviet Republic, and they concluded, after an assessment of the facts, that Russia is now passing through a crisis.

"I feel there is no doubt of it," said Mr. Poston. He glanced at his companion and received a nod of corroboration. "I have been asked if Soviet Russia is not on her feet, moving along at a good speed and progressing nicely. My reply is no. Russia is in a critical state at this moment and her fate is in the balance."

### Found Shortage of Food

"The food shortage alone," continued Mr. Moon, "is tremendous. I found Russia to be a large country, and she has very little to supply herself with at the moment."

The comments of this trained pair on the situation abroad could only be secured after a resume of the project which carried the Negro group to Russia in the first place. The little army of invasion, twenty-two members strong, left here on the Bremen in June. It had been recruited from Harlem's professional stratum and included Langston Hughes, poet; Sylvia Garner, actress, and half a dozen other celebrities.

In Russia the Harlem delegation was to perform for the Mezharabpom company in a picture of Negro labor problems on the border states, tentatively known as "Black and White." Influence was brought to bear on Premier Molotov, however, from what Mr. Moon yesterday called "obscure American sources."

One of these sources, according to a despatch from Russia printed in "The Amsterdam News" a week ago,

was Colonel Hugh Cooper, engineer and friend of Stalin. At any rate, in the words of the ebony argonauts, the film project was abandoned and the potential cast was sent on a tour of the south of Russia.

### Others Still Touring There

"The others," related Mr. Moon, "are still touring. We came back. We had time, though, to see some of Ukraine, the Crimea, and the Black Sea, and that's where we amassed some of our impressions of Russia as she is today—starved, I mean."

"In a crisis," added Mr. Poston. "We attempted to obtain an interview with Stalin, the dictator of all c. Russia," resumed Mr. Moon. "We wanted of course to protest about our treatment, but we also wanted facts about the country for our papers. When we failed to reach Stalin we talked with members of the Comintern. My impression is this. A marvelous fortitude exists in the people of Russia."

Leaving their comrades to tour the south of Russia to their heart's content, Mr. Moon and Mr. Poston moved eastward this month, resolved on finding producers for "Black and White." In Berlin, they announced yesterday, they met a celebrated director who, having seen "Hallelujah" and other Negro films, was impressed with their scheme.

**NEW YORK TIMES**  
OCT 5 1932  
**AY RACE BIAS HERE  
HALTED SOVIET FILM**

Harlem Writers Who Went to  
Russia With Negro Troupe  
Send "Inside Story."

**RESSURE ON STALIN**

Dispatch to Paper Here Asserts  
Americans Told Him Movie of  
Oppression Would Offend Us.

The charge that the Soviet Government yielded to pressure of "the forces of American race prejudice" in abandoning recently the production of the film "Black and White," or which twenty-two American Negroes had been invited to Russia, is contained in what purports to be "the inside story" of the incident published yesterday by The New York Amsterdam News, a weekly newspaper issued in Harlem.

The story is written by Henry Lee Moon, the paper's correspondent who accompanied the Negroes to Russia in June, and T. R. Preston, the dispatch says, it was admitted their story declares that production of the film was abandoned for fear it might offend American sensibilities and interfere with the movement in this country for recognition of

the Soviet Government.

According to the Moon-Preston story, Colonel Hugh Cooper, American engineer, builder of the Dnieprostroi Dam and close friend of Stalin, the Communist dictator, took the leading part in prevailing upon Stalin to order cancellation of the film, which was to depict alleged oppression of Negroes in the United States.

Stalin's yielding to the advice of Colonel Cooper and American business interests in Moscow is characterized in the story as "a betrayal of the 12,000,000 Negroes of America and all the darker exploited colonial peoples of the world."

### "Triumph" of Prejudice.

"Once again the forces of American race prejudice have triumphed, and this time in a land where it would be least expected—the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics," declares the paper's dispatch, sent from Berlin to avoid Communist censorship. "Extending its long and powerful arm into the heart of the Workers' Republic, American capitalism has turned thumbs down on a Soviet project designed to aid in the liberation of the Negro masses in the United States, and the Soviet Union, under the leadership of the Communist party, has accepted its dictates."

"Upon demand of certain American business interests desirous of establishing diplomatic accord between the U. S. S. R. and the United States, the film project, 'Black and White,' for the production of which twenty-two Negroes were invited to Russia, has been abandoned. These interests declared that the production of such a film would be viewed in America as 'meddling in internal affairs,' and stated that the action might retard recognition of the Soviet Union by the American Government and influence the latter's position on the Far East situation."

### American Favor "Courtied."

The Soviet Government chose "to court American favor rather than to follow the program of the Comintern (Communist International) in promoting the revolutionary cause among Negroes of the United States and the colonial peoples of the world," the dispatch asserts, adding that "the Comintern has accepted this compromise."

According to the dispatch, Colonel Cooper was at Dnieprostroi in the latter part of June when the Negro troupe arrived in Moscow. Upon hearing of the film project he hastened to Moscow to see Stalin, but, finding the latter out of the city, obtained an interview with Premier Molotov. The film was abandoned twenty-four hours after this interview.

A few days later the Negro group "was hastened out of Moscow on a tour of Ukraine, Crimea and the Black Sea" after being informed that active work on the film would begin in Odessa on Aug. 16, after completion of the tour. The following day, the dispatch says, it was admitted their story declares that production of the film was abandoned for fear it might offend American sensibilities and interfere with the movement in this country for recognition of

Cooper had the assistance of Ivy Lee

in prevailing upon the Soviet authorities to abandon production of the film. Mr. Lee yesterday characterized this as "ridiculous."

## Soviet Film Policy Refutes Slanders About Negro Movie

ON OCTOBER 10th, the New York Times and the Amsterdam News, bourgeois Negro newspaper, as a Berlin communication from H. L. Moon and T. R. Preston, formerly members of the cast of Black and White, purporting to explain the cessation of activity of the film—a Soviet movie designed to expose the oppression of Negro workers in America and throughout the world. The dispatch declared that "The film was abandoned for fear it might offend American sensibilities and interfere with the movement . . . for the recognition of the Soviet government, a 'betrayal of 12,000,000 Negroes in America and all the darker exploited colonial peoples of the world.'"

The facts of the case are simply that the film has been delayed because of an inadequate scenario and other technical difficulties. The charges are patently ridiculous slanders in view of the fact that "Mezrapom" film producers of this film, have never before hesitated to expose and cry out against class oppression and imperialism as brutally practiced by the capitalistic countries of the world.

Storm Over Asia and China Express attack American and British imperialistic policies in Asia; the Black Sea Mutiny exposes the activities of French capitalism in the Near East. Siberian Patrol exposes the intervention of U. S. and England during the civil war, and Sniper calls upon the proletariat of each country to convert imperial-war into civil war against the ruling class. Very recently "Mezrapom" made Prosperity which shows the conditions of workers in a large automobile factory during boom times. This film was produced at a time when Henry Ford, against whom it is an obvious attack, was one of Russia's largest creditors. And news has just arrived that this same organization has completed and is ready to release the Deserter, directed by Pudovkin, which urges the German to overthrow the fascist dictatorship in which they are clamped. And Germany has taken the place of the United States as the largest exporter to the Soviet Union.

THIS list of comprising films aimed to arouse the workers of the world surely shows how the film producers of the U. S. S. R. are not worried about ruffling the sensibilities of the capitalist world. The Workers' Film Photo League of New York of the Workers International Relief, fellow members with Mezrapom Studios takes this opportunity to repudiate the slanderous lies of Preston and Moon, and to expose the manner in which the carries on its campaign of calumnies against the Soviet Union.

—The Workers Film and Photo League of New York.

Theaters - 1932

Picture Films, etc.

# "FEATURE YOUR OWN GENIUSES." SCENARIST ADVISES RACE MEN

**Sada Cowan, Noted White Author, Says That the Negro Should Back a Project That Will Put the Cultured, Gifted Members of the Race in Their Proper Sphere.**

**PRAISES ROBESON, HAYES, JOHNSON, HUGHES**

*This article by Sada Cowan should be of special interest to our readers. This lady is one of the highest-paid and most brilliant white scenarists in Hollywood, having done many of the outstanding Cecil B. De Mille, Paramount and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer hits of recent seasons. Her opinions are possibly controversial, but entirely worth while. Miss Cowan has promised to write on other topics for our readers from time to time.*

**By SADA COWAN**

As a scenarist working in the motion picture studios, I try to depict life realistically—at least, honestly. I try to present people not as I should like to have them, but as they really are in the everyday walks of life. I try to paint them impartially, without subjective emotion, just as God Himself formed them.

Naturally, there are Negroes in a number of stories which I have written. I have often thought there was really great epic story material in the American Negro, that someone should write him up in a story where the whole spotlight of attention was focused on him, on his struggles for emancipation, for equality, for success. I have not known the race intimately enough to write such a story.

In my scenarios the Negroes have been, almost of necessity, stock characters. That is, they were either valets or butlers, or personal retainers, or elevator men, or something of the sort. I depicted this type of character because actually, in the life of the white folk, about whom I wrote, this was the only type of Negro who entered.

Please do not misunderstand. I have never subscribed to the idea that there are no other type of Negroes. Nor I am oblivious to the fact that there are Negro bankers, lawyers, physicians, artists, poets. I merely mean that these higher type of colored personalities were rarely, if ever, seen in the everyday

back such a project as the lifelike presentation of the cultured or gifted Negroes in their proper, accepted sphere. After all, why look to the white man to do the job for you? They have their own problems, their own standards. If you've a conviction, a truth, the promulgation of which will lead to the betterment of the social status of the race, why not fight for it—why not put some energy behind its realization? Isn't it a job for that famous organization of yours—I forget the name—dedicated to the advancement of the Negro in America.

Pictures like "Hallelujah," "Hearts In Dixie," depicting the picturesque Southern background of the race, did more than you realize to generate a tremendous sympathy for the colored people. Certainly it is but one small phase, and an antiquated one, of the Negro life in this country. Certainly there are a score of Negro stories infinitely worth telling, regarding which so many excellent books have been written in the past half dozen years. Agreed that motion pictures of these books—the greatest existing form of propaganda—would be a splendid thing for the race, hastening an era of more complete understanding between white and black peoples. Why, then, not have the colored financiers take an interest in seeing that they are made.

I make frequent trips to New York and other key cities where there is the opportunity to attend concerts. I have heard colored singers such as Roland Hayes, Paul Robeson and Jules Bledsoe countless times. As a practical scenarist, I know that the romantic story of Roland Hayes' rise from poverty and obscurity to wealth, fame, position as a linguist and singer of classic compositions, would make an utterly fascinating picture—that his sweet and haunting tenor voice would doubtless entrance movie-goers just as much as that of our own Lawrence Tibbett.

Down in the old MacDougal Alley "Converted Stable," I saw Charles Gilpin do Eugene O'Neill's "Emperor Jones." I know at the time I was seeing one of the greatest pieces of acting in the annals of modern American histrionics. I know that a story could have been fitted to Gilpin that he could have "kicked hell out of," as they say in our profession. He would have been a sensation in some film like "The Emperor Jones"—a literal sensation.

But as I say, our white producers have not yet seen this point. Isn't it, then, up to the Negro leaders, instead of complaining, to go ahead and work constructively in an effort to somehow see that these col-

ored geniuses get their chance to reveal their great talents to the world? I think it is a great responsibility, and one which they cannot possibly afford to overlook in their struggle for equality.

When David Arlen, Hollywood correspondent, asked me to write an article for the paper on some topic near to the hearts of Negroes in America I did not intend to do a controversial article. Nor—and this point must be made plain—am I at all belligerent and accusing in the points I have made. I don't know as much about Negroes as I'd like to. All I have written is conjecture—and it is offered humbly for what it is worth, in a spirit of kindness and a desire to understand and to help the race in its problems.

No thinking Negro need worry about his future in this country. A place in the American scheme of things is doubtless assured him. There are many situations to be altered—prejudices to be ironed out, race segregations swept aside, etc. But these must come with time and growing understanding, and the Negro simply must be patient during their gradual evolution. The adage that "Rome was not built in a day" is old and hackneyed, but none the less true. The transition from slavery to complete and unquestioned equality simply cannot be made overnight. It surely must be a consolation to know that, once effected, it will be permanent and forever.

Theaters - 1932

Picture Films, etc.

TELLS STORY OF NEGRO SOUND-FILM IN MOSCOW

*Chandler News Agency 4/5/32*

NEW YORK CITY. - (CNA) The story of the first steps in the making in Moscow of the sound-film, "Black and White", for whose production 26 American men and women went to the Soviet Union in June, is told in a letter received here from Charles Ashleigh, noted British writer, who is now in Russia. Ashleigh's letter follows in part: *n. y. city n. y.*

Carl Junghans, German film producer, young, active and ruddy, let his morning tea go stone cold while he told me about the film, "Black and White", which he is going to produce in Moscow under the auspices of the Meschrabpom Film Company.

Not so long ago, Junghans made a picture called "Strange Birds of Africa," which was far stranger to the directors of the German company which commissioned it than its name would imply.

For Junghans, with a searing revolutionary indignation, had put into the film satire and acid protest against the exploitation of the black people of Africa by white imperialism. And so the film was drastically cut by his employers, and a sugary love-story grafted on to it.

So then Junghans came to the Soviet Union. Here for the Meschrabpom he is to make the picture, "Black and White," which depicts the exploitation of the Negro people in America thru the days of slavery to the present.

"The principal section of the film shows the class struggle in America," says Junghans. "But there is a prologue which gives a glimpse of the old slave trade: the Arab traders in Africa, the shipment of slaves to America, - in which the missionaries appear, blindly to concur - and the auction scenes in New Orleans.

"Then there is a swift impression of the Civil War - which changed the Negro's status from that of chattel slave to that of wage-slave - and then we unfold the principal story, which concerns the class struggle in the United States today. There is a lynching, which is shown to be an attempt to alienate Negro and white workers.

"The film is, of course, to be a sound film. But sound will be used not merely for dialogue, but also as a species of commentary, often in a satirical sense, thus revealing the hidden motives behind the action of the individuals as expressed in their motions on the screen. For instance, in the prologue, when the missionary - who has just witnessed a scene in which shackled slaves are driven with whips into the hold of a slave-vessel - reclines under a tree and reads aloud a text from the bible, the monkeys in the tree chatter derisively and a parrot screams hoarsely, as if with scorn.

"There will also be dialogue, of course, and some Negro songs - work songs and rebel songs."

## Director Tells of U.S.S.R. Film Portraying Negroes in U.S.A.

NEW YORK.—The story of the first steps in the making in Moscow of the sound film "Black and White," for whose production 26 Americans went to the Soviet Union in June, is told in a letter received here from Charles Ashleigh, British Communist writer, who is now in the Soviet Union. Ashleigh's letter follows in part:

"Carl Junghans, German film producer, told me about the film, 'Black and White,' which he is going to produce in Moscow under the auspices of the Meschrabpom Film Company.

### Made German Film.

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"For Junghans had put into the film satire and acid protest against the exploitation of the black people of Africa by white imperialism. And so the film was drastically cut by his employers, and a sugary love-story grafted on to it.

"So then Junghans came to the Soviet Union. Here for the Meschrabpom he is to make the picture, 'Black and White,' which depicts the exploitation of the Negro people interized yesterday as 'unfounded' America through the days of slavery to the present.

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### Story of Slave in U. S.

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MOSCOW, U. S. S. R., Aug. 15 (ANP). - That the forthcoming anthology of Negro poetry soon to be published in the Soviet Union will teach Russian poets how to write social poetry was the opinion expressed by Dynamov, famous critic, last week.

The anthology will contain poems of Countee Cullen, Lewis Alexander, Claude McKay, Frank Horne, Joseph Cotter, Langston Hughes, Henry Lee Moon, and many other young poets whose works are well known in America.

NEW YORK TIMES

OCT 6 1932

### SOVIET FILM CHARGE DENIED

Communist Says Picture Featuring Negroes Was Not Protested Here.

Cyril Lamarkin, national secretary of the Friends of the Soviet Union, a Communist organization, characterized the charge that the production in the Soviet Union of the film "Black and White," had been stopped because the Soviet Government was afraid of its political effect in the United States. He said the film was abandoned because "of scenario and technical difficulties."

Representatives of Negro interests charged that the film, which was to have depicted the alleged oppression of Negroes in the United States, was stopped on the intervention of American business concerns that favor American recognition of the Soviet Government. Colonel Hugh L. Cooper, an American engineer with large contracts in Russia, had been pictured as primarily responsible for the move.

# Film Group Plans For Russian Tour

Amsterdam News Correspondent Confirms in

Part Story of Dropping Project—Fails

to Mention "Strandina"

A radiogram received Monday from Henry Lee Moon, Amsterdam News reporter with an American group in Moscow for the purpose of making a film of Negro life for the Soviet film bureau, Meschrabpom, stated that the photoplay plans had been abandoned.

This message confirmed in part a special dispatch filed Thursday in Moscow by a correspondent of the Herald Tribune. The Tribune story stated that the players were stranded, but Mr. Moon's message depicted no alarm on the part of the players.

He stated that the reason given for the abandonment of the production was that the scenario facilities and players were unsatisfactory, but added that he believed the real cause was withheld. Moon said that drastic action was likely. The players may tour the country. A number of the members have had stage experience.

The Tribune story stated that the Soviet had dropped the project because of its desire to improve trade and diplomatic relations with the United States, and did not wish to offend America with a picture showing the hard lot of the Negro.

American Communists apparently are not worried about dispatches that have reached this country concerning the twenty-two Negroes who went over there to make a picture, but who are reported as "stranded" in Moscow. At the offices of The Daily Worker, the New Masses, the John Reed Club, and Amkino, the company that distributes Russian pictures in this country, the opinions, as expressed unofficially, are the same. There is something wrong about the dispatch to the Tribune.

"It seems to us that somebody is working overtime to earn his pay in Moscow," an editor of The Daily Worker told a reporter for The Amsterdam News. "I believe you will find that the picture will be made after a few minor details have been taken care of. Although we have no direct word from Moscow yet, we are certain that the rumor that Soviet Russia is catering to race prejudice of white America by holding up this picture will prove to be unfounded. It is doubtful, however, that the picture would ever be shown in the United States, even if it is completed." Ask why this would be the case, the editor blamed the American motion picture censorship and declared that it would ban such a picture if it is made according to present plans.

Meschrabpom not only encourages

Most of those on the trip came here with hardly more than a few dollars needed for incidental expenses. Since their arrival, and while awaiting the call for work, they have received at least one payment on their salaries, the players admit. It was understood that they were to receive a monthly salary of not less than 600 rubles during their stay, but the money was to be spent in Russia.

Included in the group now trying to formulate new plans are Wayland Rudd, Louise Thompson, Katherine Jenkins, Mildred Jones, Mollie Lewis, Dorothy West, Juanita Lewis, Langston Hughes, Thurston Lewis, Sylvia Garner, Laurence O. Alberga, Allan McKenzie, George Sample, Constance White, and Theodore Poston, all of New York, the last named a member of the staff of The Amsterdam News until he joined the company.

In Also Matthew Crawford and Lorimer Miller, California; Leonard Hillman, Washington; Frank C. Montero, Brooklyn and Lloyd Patterson, Westfield N. J.

## 21 U.S. MOTION PICTURE ACTORS NOW IN ODESSA

By CHATWOOD HALL

ODESSA, UKRAINE REPUBLIC U.S.S.R.—The group of 21 colored Americans who left Moscow on August 1 for to make a picture of interest in the Soviet Union, arrived in Odessa early today. The members of the group were Leonard Hillman, on account of illness. They are, Henry Moon and

Odessa is the city in which most of the revolutionary motion picture "Black and White," will be made for which this group came to Russia. At Red Hotel While in Odessa for two days

rooms have been provided in the Red Hotel, a first class house in the heart of the city. As the dining room of the Red Hotel is being reconstructed, meals are being provided at the London Hotel, an exquisitely-appointed hotel overlooking the harbor of Odessa and the Black Sea. It is in this hotel that the group will stay during the making of the picture, after their return from a voyage across the Black Sea to the Crimea.

August 5 was spent in Kiev, Ukraine Republic, an ancient and beautiful city of 700,000 persons on the Dnieper River. Kiev is considered the mother of Russian cities and the cradle of medieval Russian culture. Here the group visited the Kiev Kino factory, a large and modern motion picture plant, and the offices of the Kiev Soviet, where an audience was granted by the chairman and the vice-chairman of the Kiev Soviet. The vice-chairman is a Jew. He related to the group how severely Soviet law deals with persons who show any outward expressions of race prejudice.

## "Zombie," African Picture, Is Untrue To Native Life Declares Haitian Athlete

CHICAGO, Aug. 25.—(ANP)—When four staff men from the Chicago Daily News, led by Frank L. Hayes, popular feature writer, met Sylvio Cator, Haitian jumper, on his arrival here from Los Angeles and asked him to tell them something about Zombies, Cator replied that the so-called "Zombie" is nothing more than a fragment of the white travel writer's imagination.

Mr. Cator explained to The News reports and to George Garner, the international tenor, whose house guest he was while in Chicago, that men like Seabrook have come to Haiti with a preconceived idea of what they wanted and proceeded to write about their notions whether they found them in fact or not.

He admitted that there might have been ideas among the old Haitians about Zombies, but such notions were at least two generations out of date. He explained also that the pictures used were not obtained by the latter in the way he said they were, but were lent to him by a Haitian doctor, Holley, who had lived in New York.

Seabrook, Cator insisted, evidently likes to present bizarre angles in his writings, a tendency exposed when a French writer followed him into Africa to find some of the things Seabrook had found. The French writer returned and reported that Seabrook's stuff, though entertaining, was all the bunk.

## TWO MEMBERS OF RUSSIAN FILM PARTY ILL

Henry Moon and Howard Hill "Under the Weather."

TOUR OF TURKEY  
ALSO, PLANNED  
N.Y. Hears Film Has Fizzled.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since this dispatch was mailed the AFRO from Russia on August 3, New York papers report that the project of a Russian film dealing with Negro life in America has collapsed and has left actors stranded. Local Communists believe that this report is unfounded. They say they feel sure that the project will go through.

By CHATWOOD HALL  
(Special to the Afro-American)  
MOSCOW, U.S.S.R., August 3.—

The Place of the Revolution and the main thoroughfares, the parks and the museums, the dining rooms and the lobbies of the Metropole, Grand, New Moscow, and Savoy hotels, and historic Red Square where Tartar Khans besieged the toothed walls of the Kremlin and where Napoleon and his frozen army entered this ancient city, will miss, after today, 22 colored Americans who came to Russia at the invitation of the Soviet Government to participate in the revolutionary motion picture, "Black and White."

Two members of the group, Henry Moon and Leonard Hillman on account of illness, may not be able to leave with the group, their doctor advises them that the trip may prove too arduous, they will remain in the Grand Hotel in Moscow and will join the group later in Odessa.

Arrangements have been made by the Meschrabpom Film Company, which is the government motion picture trust, that is to make the picture, to take this group on a special tour of many points of interest within the Soviet Union.

Included in the places to be visited are, Kharkov, capital of the Ukraine Republic, and a key city in the socialist economic development of the Soviet Union. The Pal-

ace of State Industry, the largest building in Russia, is situated in Kharkov. From Kharkov the group will go to the gigantic Dnieprostroi dam, the largest hydro-electric station in the world.

The tour will end about August 16 in Odessa in south Russia on the Black Sea. While in the south the group will go to Sukhum in far south Russia near the Turkish border. It is possible that the group may be given a trip to Turkey. Many of the scenes for the picture will be taken near Odessa and Sukhum. Actual casting for roles began in Moscow on August 2, and is expected to be completed immediately after our arrival in Odessa.

COLUMBUS, O.  
DISPATCH  
OCT 4 1932

## A Soviet Film Plan Abandoned

FROM the London Sunday Observer comes a story of the abandonment of a plan for the spread of Soviet propaganda among the Negro population of the United States. Under the title "Black and White," a film was to be produced, purporting to show the relations between the two races in this country. Of course the theme would have been so handled as to convey the suggestion that the Negroes would be much better off under the Soviet form of government.

One of the largest Soviet cinema organizations, says the Observer, had invited 22 American Negroes to Russia to take part in making the film, but the preparatory work had hardly got under way when it suddenly came to a standstill. The disappointed Negro participants were told of "unforeseen technical difficulties," but they got no intelligible explanation of the nature of those difficulties.

It was soon whispered about, however, that some supposedly influential American, interested in promoting closer relations between the United States and the Soviet government, had told the Soviet authorities that such a film, coming from a Soviet origin, would have an extremely bad effect upon American public opinion, and would militate against any movement towards closer political and economic relations between the two countries. The scheme was therefore dropped.

Such is the story, as told by the London Observer. Just how close it lies to actual facts, we do not know, but it is well enough known that Moscow communism has long had an eye on the Negroes in America as a possible field for Soviet missionary work. The film scheme, if it was actually concocted, was of course quite as unwise as the alleged American adviser made it out.

Theaters-1932

## Picture Films, etc.

Asheville, N. C. Citizen  
Friday, August 26, 1932

### Negroes Assail Soviet

The party of twenty-two American Negroes who went to Russia in June under promise of big salaries for helping to produce a film depicting "the oppression of the Negro in the United States," and who were reported stranded in Moscow following the action of the Soviet Union in banning the production, are still in Russia. Four members of the party are reported by the Moscow correspondent of The New York Herald Tribune to have appeared before the Communist Third International to urge that organization to fight the decision of the government dropping the project.

They told the Communist International, says the correspondent, "that the film was squelched on the grounds of political expediency and that this action 'compromises 12,000,000 Negroes of the United States and all the darker colonial peoples, while sacrificing furtherance of the advantages to be gained from American recognition of the Soviet Union.'" They are further quoted as denouncing the Soviet government's decision calling the film off as "a base compromise, comparable to an ignoble concession to race prejudice, of a type for which the Communist party is continually berating the Christian church, the Second Socialist International and other social-fascist organizations."

Eighteen of the American Negroes took no part in the protest. The officials of the motion picture company say that the project was dropped for technical reasons.

The story of this strange adventure becomes increasingly interesting.

brought into the light recently when the four Race men stated that they intended to fight the principle of the government's intention.

Plans for the film "Black and White" were pigeon-holed, it is claimed, due to the fact that its production might be offensive to American public opinion, which in turn would retard any efforts to obtain recognition for the Soviet Union.

#### A Compromise

In the statement of the four the dropping of the project was termed "a base compromise, comparable to an ignoble concession to race prejudice of a type for which the Communist party is continually berating the Christian church, the Second Socialist International and other social-fascist organizations."

The four who have appealed to the Communist International are Thurston McNary Lewis, a member of the American Communist party; Theodore Poston, representing the Associated Negro Press; Henry Lee Moon of the Amsterdam News, New York, and Lawrence Alberta of New York city. The other 18 Americans abstained from the protest.

Mezharabpom officials insist that the project will be dropped for technical reasons.

The party of 22 American Race people left New York on June 11 and went to Leningrad by way of Stettin and Helsingfors. They were welcomed in Moscow by high Soviet officials, were given quarters in one of the best hotels and received a month's pay when production of the film was started. They paid their own way to Russia expecting to receive high salaries.

In the group, in addition to those mentioned above, were Langston Hughes, novelist and poet, of New York; Wayland Rudd and Dorothy West, members of the cast of "Porgy"; Sylvia Garner, who appeared with Ethel Barrymore in "Scarlet Sister Mary"; Juanita Lewis, member of the Hall Johnson choir; Mollie Lewis, student at Co-

which has been in the Soviet Union for the past two months has just completed a tour of the Black Sea and returned here to begin preparations for active work on the film, "Black and White." The tour took them through the Ukraine, Crimea and part of the Caucasus.

These parts of the Soviet Union present more than usual interest to Negroes because of the fact that here the racial problems of old Russia were most acute and because of the successful manner in which the new order has solved them.

The Jewish problem was especially acute in the Ukraine prior to the revolution and was the scene of many pogroms and of vicious discriminations. At present this problem has been ironed out on the basis of the formula of self-determination, religiously applied by the Soviet power to minority groups.

Whereas in the old order the Jews were barred from government jobs, forced to live in "Jim-crow" districts and refused work in the industrial works, they are now playing a large part in all of those spheres.

The Caucasus is one of the melting pots of the world. In that region are to be found at least 50 distinct nationalities who formerly held implacable hatreds toward each other and whose strife was thought to be eternal. The eternal strife has again been solved and perfect accord reigns. Again the formula of self-determination has proved the solvent.

It is in the Caucasus that the Negro village of Russia exists. This Negro village is thought to have been founded by deserting mercenary soldiers. The Russians are so little concerned over color differences that this group has passed unnoticed for years. Their rights are of course protected by the majority groups among which they live.

"The Soviet Union's successful solution of the so-called insoluble race problems must be reckoned with wherever the racial problem

presents itself. In America, where the race problem afflicts Negroes on every hand, it is especially important," is the assertion of competent observers here.

## "BLACK KING" NOT SO HOT, CRITIC SAYS OF MOVIE

### Picture Is Obviously Based On Life Of Garvey

Journal and Guide  
By JOHN LOUIS CLARKE

NEW YORK CITY—Having just witnessed and heard the first showing of "Black King," the best report I can give is that, like the novel of Negro life, the talking picture of Negro life has yet to be filmed. Yet, the "Black King" represents the best effort so far in Negro screen filming. *Norfolk Va.*

For once, the acting is not stilted. One leaves the theatre with the impression that, given an adequate, vehicle and intelligent directing, the cast would produce a creditable work. As it is, the "Black King" is just another mediocre picture and does the producers no credit.

#### Simple Story 1/23/32

The story is quite simple. Charcoal Johnson, deacon in the Rise and Shine Baptist Church, of Logan, Mississippi, originates the Back to Africa movement. Marcus Garvey and his life are sensed behind the story of the play. Charcoal rises to affluence and power but never ceases to be a clown and a buffoon.

The end comes with startling abruptness. One gathers that the producers were themselves a bit startled at reaching the end of their footage so quickly, and with a grand rush, terminated the picture. The plot itself could have been worked into an excellent affair. The directing is, brutally, miserable. The picture drags at the opening scene and never gains speed.

#### Its Greatest Fault

The impression is given that an enjoyable and creditable film could have been produced with just a little bit of energy and intelligence.

The greatest fault lies in the directing. Deacon Johnson is permitted, all through the picture, to indulge in lengthy and windy orations which are inexcusably tiresome and which slow the action down to a ludicrous degree.

The picture gets off to a bad start. A Negro chorus, unseen, moans a wierd chant which is unmistakably Negroid, while waving hands and bending figures are shadowed on the screen. This gives the picture the required Negro motif but the scheme is so hackneyed that one immediately recalls previous Negro pictures and plays.

#### Negro at His Worst

It is to be hoped that the Southland Picture Company, producers of the picture, will not again attempt such a picture which shows the Negro at his worst. The cast is not allowed to use even passable English although the plantation lingo employed is not agreeable to the ears of the average Negro audience.

And yet, of the four of us who saw the show at the Lafayette, opinion was equally divided as to its merits and demerits. Two thought it inexcusably execrable; the other two thought it good amusement. To the remark that the acting was clever and spontaneous, the answer was made that it really was not acting—it was merely natural action, which may or may not have been true.

By all means see "Black King." It is undoubtedly the best done so far. You may like it. Personally, I thought it stupid, even objectionable.

## Four Actors Balk

Chicago Defender, Chicago Ill.  
9-3-32

## at Russian Movie

NEW YORK, Sept. 2.—Charging that the cancellation of the film to be named "Black and White," which the Mezharabpom company of Moscow was to have produced in order to show the differences in race attitudes in Russia and in America, was something which "compromises 12,000,000 Negroes of the United States and all the darker colonial peoples, while sacrificing furtherance of the Communist world revolution to the advantages to be gained from American recognition of the Soviet Union," four of the actors voiced a protest.

The four protestants claimed that the Communist International squelched the film on the grounds of political expediency. The clash between the Communist program for world revolution and the immediate interest of the Soviet Union was

lumbia university, and Loren R. Miller, young California editor.

## Negro Film Group Tours U.S.S.R.; Race Problem Studied

Pittsburgh Courier

By LOREN MILLER

ODESSA, U. S. S. R., Sept. 8—The Negro film group



## Negro Stage Shot to Pieces

BY THE VETERAN REVIEWER.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is the second of a series of articles laying bare many reasons why the Negro Theatre—as such in Negro communities—has failed to make progress along with other lines in which the “man farthest down” has engaged. The writer has devoted many years of careful study to these conditions, and for the first time in the history of Negro Journalism the truth is laid bare for readers of this paper.

CONTINUING the article which gurus are allowed to break the mu-  
appeared under the same headtion by lolling about in the wings  
in this paper two weeks ago. I where they can be plainly seen by  
would like to point out that there people in the audience sitting in  
are many factors contributing to the boxes and on both sides of the  
the lamentable condition of the Ne-orchestra.

gro theatre today chief among them being lack of management and showmanship upon the part of those in control. It is not unusual to see some of the actors (?) putting the finishing touches to their costumes before coming onto the stage, and not only

Far be it from me to attempt to do what we see the stage manager at his  
hold up the people of any race to work, but bend an ear to hear his  
ridicule, or to saddle upon an entire bald jokes or heated shafts of vit-  
trace the change that the majority of directed at some stage hand  
of these theatre owners go be or performer. A short time back  
yond William Makepeace Shakes-one of the most disgraceful things  
peare's immortal character, Shy-met by a refined person seeking an  
lock, in wringing from Negro evening's entertainment in one of  
performers and Negro commu-these places was the "standing  
paties more than their pound of room only" crowd.

gash, but the fact remains that Packed to the very doors, many in what is known as the Negro Theatre this crowd would be milling about. Instead of stopping the sale of tickets will point out today those factorsets at a reasonable time the box which have contributed their larg-office would remain open, and est share towards helping to ruin those who sought relief in demand these houses. ing their money back would be

If you travel in the East and visit treated in a most discourteous manner those theatres in Negro communities. Seldom, if ever, given to writings wholly patronized by membership letters to the newspapers professed of the race, you will find that after testing against this condition, and a few years the houses are allowed never appealing to the authorities to fall into the category of dump having jurisdiction over this want. More so today than at any other time breaking of the law, the better time during the history of our people of people would remain away. While there are thousands of Negroes outraged at this bold disregard of whose education and culture will of decency, law and order, this not permit them to enter these writer many years ago called upon the houses. The New York Fire Department to

3 This is a natural condition, be- correct this condition—a move suc-  
3 cause the race has been rapidly perinduced by a fire in Canada  
advancing in education, wealth and which trapped many innocent peo-  
culture. Patronizing the theatres inole under similar conditions. Quick  
question for a time, they soon dis-iction upon the part of the author-  
over that the people running them lies so incensed the man produc-  
are actuated by only one motive,ng the show at the time it was  
said that is to make money withoutnly by the turn of good fortune  
returning a fair share to the up-that a tragedy that would have  
keep of the houses. Ill-smelling,rocked Harlem from stem to stern  
carpets torn and ragged in manywas averted. Of that we will write  
places, bad lighting, creaking seats,some other day.

rest rooms for women filthy and in Conditions had become so bad at an unsanitary condition, untrain-one house the echo of gin bot- ed ushers, insolence upon the partles falling upon the uncarpeted of many attaches, impertinence to floor would raise a laugh among refined actors by stage managersthe yokels, and one night a full taking their cues from the formerhouse was treated to the sight of a cloak and suit salesmen passing fordrunken newspaperman, who tried managers, and many other thingsheroically to interrupt the show, be- which I will enumerate further oning taken by his coat collar up the in this article. center aisle by the stage manager

to keep the stage a "land of makegood fortune or whatever you believe," stage hands and chorus choose to call it, certainly has its

twists and quirks for some people, for the same newspaperman was to return many years later to the same house—from which he was “forever barred”—as the manager of a sister act.

"To what do you attribute the lack of patronage at my theatre?" a well-known manager asked me some time ago, "I have brought the best acts and shows that I could find, yet the people do not seem to appreciate my efforts." What these men who become blind in their quest for the Almighty Dollar fail to realize, along with the things already pointed out in this article, is that by the time they have used up all the best attractions to be obtained their houses have gone to the dogs.

Nothing in these theatres gives one the feeling of that air of comfort, that hospitable atmosphere and that sense of satisfaction one enjoys by reclining in clean, soft seats, courteously seated by ushers trained to anticipate your desire for a program, and to place you in a receptive mood to welcome the enticing strains from a well trained orchestra in an overture, and later capping the climax of your evening's enjoyment by the slow ascent of the silent curtain.

The best dressing rooms I have seen in theatres in the East catering to Negroes were those in the Alhambra Theatre. In about all the other houses the rooms where the actors must spend a great part of their lives are but makeshifts, dirty and forbidding. Contrast the condition spoken of above with those that obtain in the "white houses," even in the smaller towns, and you will understand why the Negro Theatre descends to a dump catering to the lowest element in the community in the shortest space of time.

Usually when writing about these theatres I try to confine myself to the East, thereby making it impossible for some misguided but well meaning sundown writer to take exception. In the East I have been in all of them. But what about Chicago and the entire country? I make bold to say that the same thing holds true. Do you hear much in these days of those grand, great and glorious houses in Chicago opened but a few years back for the entertainment of our people? Not much. They, too, have gone the way of all theatrical flesh.

I have many friends among the Jews who control all the Negro theatres, but there are many among them upon whose shoulders can be placed the blame for the unholy condition in which the Negro Theatre is placed. Trained by a his-

tory of persecution and pogroms to the value of the dollar which enabled them to gain their best foothold in the United States of America, they are utterly without foresight to understand that all human nature is the same, and that to hold the attention of those who would support their theatres they must learn that Negroes react in the same way to beauty, grandeur, cleanliness and wholesome shows as white people. Some of them have given to the American Theatre some of its finest things, but the majority of those among us are not in this class.

Of what calibre are those on Broadway who are always antagonizing the police and the decent element of people by their attempts to present almost naked women in suggestive dances and more salacious and suggestive jokes? Truly not the trees the branches of which spread to the Negro Theatre, where it is thought that undressed females and vulgarity constitute art in an institution prostituted for the Almighty Dollar by whom er—er—wot?

Do not take umbrage, gentlemen, but look deeper beneath the surface and learn that even from the mouths of babes come wisdom at times. **Make these houses** palaces of mirth, music and laughter; and if you bring to the Negro Theatre the same things you would be forced to do in other neighborhood houses, your theatres would be accepted as real community playhouses.

U. S. S. R. to Produce  
'Black and White'

By ALAN MCKENZIE  
(Member "Black and White" Group)

MOSCOW, March 6 (By Radiogram).—In a special interview with the directors of the Meshrabpomfilm organization regarding "Black and White," the film of the life of the American Negro masses, whose production was postponed last August, 1934, was informed that the scenario is now being rewritten by Grebner and production will start before the end of the year.

The mistakes of the previous scenario will be eliminated, while new artistic, ideological and technical material will be added. The scenario will be ready by August, and from August to November the technical arrangements for the film will be completed. The actual filming will start in December.

The picture will be made in Moscow and wherever the location is suitable. A minimum of mass scenes are scheduled to be made in the United States, if possible. The director has not yet been decided on, but someone with wide experience will be secured.

In casting the film, members of the former group who were brought here from the United States last year will be given preference where their types are in accord with the new scenario. Their expenses will be paid in full.

The postponement of the production of the film, "Black and White," made necessary last August because of an unsatisfactory scenario, was the occasion for vicious slanderous attacks on the Soviet Union in the capitalist press of the world by three of the members of the group of Negro actors and intellectuals who had been brought to the Soviet Union to produce the picture.

The other members of the group of 22, which included the noted Negro poet, Langston Hughes, quickly exposed these slanders.

# John Larkin Is Highest Salaried Of Group In Movies. Writer Says

Larkin's Check Averages About \$50 a Day—Other Artists' Salaries Listed.

By HARRY LEVETTE, for A. N. P.)

LOS ANGELES, Cal., May 25—In answer to many recent inquiries as to the salaries paid "stars in the movies" a little quiet snooping reveals that none of them are getting paid as high as were the late Charles Gilpin for "Uncle Tom's Cabin," or Step-in-fetchit in "Hearts in Dixie."

Gilpin, who starred in the Harriet Beecher Stowe epic, finished later by a local actor, James Lowe, received \$2,000 a week according to report. Virgil Owens, a local player, was also paid by the studio to act as his valet and to help guarantee that he was on time at the studio each day. Step-in-fetchit received \$1,500 a week from Fox Studio while starring in "Hearts in Dixie" and for "Fox Follies" and several other pictures in which as co-star or featured player he worked later.

John Larkin is now "high point man" in wages, according to my check-up, although there are a dozen others whose weekly pay checks during an engagement seem like young fortunes during these days of little cash. This group called frequently for from one to several days jobs get on an average of \$25 a day, payable every night.

Larkins' pay when on a day check is \$50 a day. Whether for a day or a month he works by contract, all his arrangements being made by the Jack Curtis Agency his managers. This famous office which has the business affairs of a number of white stars under their jurisdiction has offices in New York, London and Hollywood.

Salaries of Louise Beaver, who is about the busiest of the colored actresses, Gertrude Howard, Billy McClain, Teresa Harris, Clarence Muse, Charlie Moore, and Oscar Smith are never below \$25 a day. The pay of extras has fallen since the last year of the prolonged depression from \$7.50 a day to \$5.

HUDSON, N. Y.

STAR

JUN 3 1933

MOVIE FANS GRATEFUL

The federal trade commission has made one ruling that should win for that body the everlasting thanks of the American moving picture public.

The commission recently issued a ruling barring from exhibition any jungle film that was not made under the conditions set forth in the advertisements of the picture. A great number of jungle pictures, which the producers claimed were made in the "heart of Africa" or other wild territory, have been exhibited in the last year or two. Civilized beings have a peculiar interest in savages and other inhabitants of the untamed places on the earth's surface. There was an immediate and popular response to the first of these pictures. Producers quickly saw a gold mine in such films, and there soon was a flood of them.

Some of the films may have made under the conditions claimed, but it did not require the word of the trade commission to convince observant fans that many of them were not. According to the commission, the main parts of some of them were "shot" in Hollywood and the Los Angeles zoo. Negro children, attired in loin clothes and smiles—and sometimes without the former—were used as African pygmies. Numerous other deceptions were practiced, according to the commission.

Henceforth the latter is to see that there shall be no repetition of this.

The people may like to be fooled but after they find out they are being fooled they want that particular form of deception to stop.

## FORMER BROADWAY STAR IN MOVIES

HOLLYWOOD, Calif. — (WS)—Elizabeth Taylor, former Broadway actress, who is reported to have appeared in such plays as "Up and Up," "Subway Express," "Social Register," "School Girl" and "Here Today," as well as many short subjects for Warner Brothers in New York City, is here on Paramount lot with Mae West.

Miss Taylor is in the employ of Mae West and is also working as a maid in pictures. She has a part in the forthcoming vehicle "No Angel," which is her employer. She has had much camera experience and since coming here she has not recognized anything unusual about pictures.

The former Broadway actress told a reporter that she played the original role in "Up and Up" as well as many other originals while she was on the Broadway stage. She is a cinnamon-hued brown with large white teeth and expressive eyes, which combination makes her a favorite player for all the directors for whom she works.

### The Negro in Drama

The moving picture featuring a Negro cast which was shown last week at a local theatre was a demonstration of what that race can do in dramatic art.

The scenario was written for Negroes and was built on a play by one of the leading contemporary dramatists, who had developed an excellent Negro characterization. The Negro baritone who played the leading role—who almost had the show to himself—demonstrated that he was not only a singer but an able actor in portraying Negro characters. This was not his first dramatic attempt.

The colored race has a place in drama, as well as in music and the other arts, but it is only lately that this has been discovered. It should cultivate its talents. There is no reason why the Negroes should not have their own culture, their own entertainment, their own heroes and idols. They would be better and give them greater satisfaction than attempts at imitation, which cannot be successful.

Theaters - 1934

Picture Films, etc.

## NEGROES IN MOVIES

For a long number of years all the Negro parts in moving pictures were not really taken by Negroes but by made up white actors. And then what a thrill it was to see *Gary Amusements* as a principal with a group of seemingly democratic kiddies.

About the same time Louise Beaver made her appearance as a maid. From then on we see occasional Negro maids, valets and children taking rather pleasing parts.

Nobie Johnson has for some reason always been well cast. He has never been made to look ugly or ridiculous. A few years ago he was cast in the distinguished role of a Moor in "The Thief of Bagdad."

Paul Roberson was superb in "Emperor Jones"—he made the play. Critics all over the country have acclaimed his brilliant acting.

In "Hold Your Man," the little colored girl whose name is not now recalled had a clever interesting part. As did her father, the old minister.

She had the most outstanding part of any Negro actor, we've yet seen. We wondered, last summer

when "Gold Diggers" was playing at a Chicago loop theater, why Etta Moten's picture didn't appear in the lobby with others in the cast and why her name did not appear on the screen program. She made

"The Forgotten Man" number unforgettable to those who heard her pensive singing. In "Flying Down to Rio" it was gratifying to see her name appear on the screen program. Clarence Muse also conspicuously

cast in this picture. He is an old dramatic actor and for years was with the Qualtiy Amusement Company.

Cab Calloway has appeared in several successful pictures and is now touring Europe. Duke Ellington will shortly make his appearance with Mae West

in her late sensation, "It Ain't No Sin."

These actors have proved that "it can be done."

## Negro War Film To Be Produced

NEW YORK CITY, Apr. 5.—(ANP)—A motion picture dealing graphically with the work of Negro troops in the World War is now in production and will be released early in April, it was announced this week. The picture which will contain many hitherto suppressed shots taken during the great conflict by the U. S. Signal Corps, will be titled, "The Unknown Soldier Speaks."

While many films dealing with the subject of war have been produced during the past few years none has yet shown in any detail the tremendous part played by colored troops stationed along the Western front. This new photoplay will attempt to do. Its announced purpose will be to compare the present situation, with its unrest and rumbling of war, with the situation which immediately preceded the great world conflict, and to show the significance of the social and nationalistic movements of today as compared with the same movements of 1914.

Unique in its presentation, the story of the film is related by a voice which is presumably that of the "unknown soldier." As the scenes unfold, he narrates his impressions of them as a common, everyday man who has lived thru those harrowing events and who has, in that process, formed definite reactions to the ever-present spectre of war.

## THE PREACHMENT OF TOLERANCE

The latest development of the films, according to the newspaper reviewers, is the "preachment of tolerance", a sadly needed practice in this day and time. While the screen production of "Are We Civilized?" which was credited with this purpose, was praised as having intentions that are "sincere and highly commendable", it emerged only as "generally feeble and mediocre". Its purpose was proclaimed to prove that intolerance, bigotry and hatred only tend to throw the world into armed conflict and to retard civilization. The film consisted for the most part of news reels shots from old silent pictures showing characters like Napoleon, Lincoln, Christ, Buddha, Moses and Julius Caesar.

Since the moving picture has so often been utilized as the means of vicious preachments of intolerance and racial hatred, of which the "Birth of a Nation" was the most notorious example, it being used to create new candidates for the Ku Klux Klan, it is only right that the pendulum should begin to swing the other way and create a more wholesome sentiment. Something of this sort has already taken place on the stage, where we have seen such dramas as "They Shall Not Die" and

## Other Editors Say

### THE NEGRO'S CULTURAL ORIGINS

A motion picture which Paul Robeson, the distinguished Negro singer and actor believes will revolutionize American ideas of the Negro, is now being filmed at the London Film Studios in England.

It is called "Bosambo", and is described as likely to be the "first comprehensive film record, in sound and picture, of the culture of the Negro races." Native African music, dances, speech, and rituals have been filmed on the Dark Continent, and these will provide a background for Paul Robeson, who in the role of Bosambo, is to sing the primitive music of his own race for the first time in motion pictures.

Interviewed by the London Observer concerning the forthcoming production, Mr. Robeson expressed great enthusiasm over its potentialities.

"You know this film is a very exciting thing for me", he said. "For the first time since I began acting, I feel that I've found my place in the world, that there's something out of my own culture which I can express and perhaps help to preserve."

He went on to say that he finds that "the African natives had a definite culture a long way before the culture of the Stone Age—not haphazard like the Australian aborigines, but an integrated thing, which is still unspoiled by Western

influence, and in many ways akin to the Polynesian and the Chinese." He added that this culture is brought out in the film "in a really magnificent way."

The music in the picture he described as "some very fine songs, wedding songs, and river songs." He himself, will sing four or five of them.

"I find", he said enthusiastically, "that when I begin to sing that music I cannot get clear below Western culture to something way back in my own blood." In his opinion, the picture "will surprise the people both here and in America who fancy they know all about the Negroes, and most of all it will surprise the Negroes themselves."

English film producers have launched an interesting experiment. America will scan the Robeson drama with profound interest.

—Richmond Times-Dispatch



*Admission 9-22-34 Portland, Oregon*  
 ...Will Rogers as Judge Priest and the Three Brownies, the Brown sisters, in the motion picture "Judge Priest" now drawing large crowds at the Paramount Theatre on Broadway. (Cut courtesy The Oregon Daily Journal)

# Noted Painter Lists Stepin Fetchit Among 13 Players Worth Painting; Great Beauty Declared Not Enough

Fox Film Comedian Rated First—Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, Norma Shearer Follow.

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Nov. 28—Declaring great beauty not enough, Hubert Stowitts, noted Hollywood painter, says "There are only thirteen Hollywood players worth painting. The 13—and not a Follies graduate or an ex-collar ad man in the lot—include Stepin Fetchit, first, and then, in no particular order, Boris Karloff, Greta Lederer, Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, Henry B. Walthall, Jetta Paul Muni. "The movies have many actresses of really great beauty, but that is not enough," Stowitts said when making his selection. "Only experience, in life, gives char-

acter. Some day, when they are older, many of these women will be worth painting. Even when they have white hair they will be more beautiful than they are now." Stowitts, former Rushville, Neb. boy, who became Pavlova's dancing partner a week after being graduated from college and later became a painter, has come to Hollywood to direct the ballet numbers for the Fox Company's "Dante's Inferno." No doubt it is the experience and unusual drawl of the famous Fox film comedian to cause him to list

mode of shaving eyebrows." He thinks women who shave their eyebrows are insipid.

Stepin Fetchit at the top of Norma Shearer's features of aristocracy; that elusive something of Francis Lederer; Will Roger's genius for perspective; Paul Muni's animal magnetism in human form; that definite character of Anna Mae Wong, Boris Karloff and Charles Laughton; Jetty Goudal's glamorous characterization, and Henry B. Walthall's beauty of soul. As a parting shot, Stowitts hits at the women, when he says: "One important reason many modern young women—including stars—are not paintable is the prevailing

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Picture Films.

## "PASSING" FILM

Guardian

THE TRAGEDY OF "PASSING" IS DELICATELY PICTURED - CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AND SYMPATHETIC PORTRAALS OF THE COLORED RACE EVER SCREENED.

By PAUL JORDAN

Last night I sat through the preview of a really gripping picture which has as its theme a racial angle which hitherto has been avoided on the screen. The subject of "passing" is so delicately handled with a real understanding that it presents a most dramatic and vital emotion of the colored race, powerfully enacted by the lovable Louise Beavers as the dark mother and pretty Fredi Washington turning in her best performance as the fair daughter who struggled to be white and in so doing broke her mother's heart and caused her death. The quiet of the huge R.K.O. Keith Memorial



Theatre with its darkened amphitheatre was broken by loud sobs and sounds of weeping by the rapt audience which broke down at the death scene. A most realistic Harlem funeral is reenacted for "Aunt Delilah" who always wished for a grand percession when she died. A replica of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York with an immense turnout of various fraternal orders brings the picture to a smashing climax when the grief stricken daughter Peola breaks away from the crowd and throws herself on her mother's casket in the nearse. Principal roles in the film are sympathetically handled by Claudette Colbert, Warren William, Rochelle Hudson and Ned Sparks as they link the story to the colored characters. See it all this week!

## Fannie Hurst Picture Portrays Vivid Story

(By B. C. F.)

Through the courtesy of the management of the local Hamrick Orpheum Theatre, I was privileged to witness the first showing in Portland of John M. Stahl's filmization of Fannie Hurst's sensational novel, "Imitation of Life". I have witnessed a number of pictures in which members of the Negro race have been cast, but none which brought out the delicate interracial problem so cleverly and yet so accurately as does this great opus.

Bernice Patton, in writing about the play says:

The making of the picture has been a delicate task because the plot involves the social, and economic problem of the Negro. The kind, sympathetic Stahl, was a mighty brave man to produce the stirring, daring, drama. He took every precaution not to offend either race. Daily, on the set I saw him scrutinize the script religiously so that there was as little offense as possible. Throughout the screen version he struck out the word nigger. This film has a finesse of the great genius, and I hope the Negro is emancipated enough, and true enough to himself to accept the truth; furthermore he must know that time, patience, faith in himself, education, efficiency, and finance are salvation of prejudice.

Naturally, there are sequences in the film that will grieve my people, but I beg of them to be tolerant; use discretion in their thinking and grow into the the industry that spoil your economic advantages and aims to erase the color-line. Don't possibilities in the movies by intolerant criticism. You must remember that this picture gives you your first real star, Louise Beavers, fabulous financial gains to the race,

and opens the way for other Negro artists in the films.

I think, the epic really serves its purpose, inasmuch as it proves to white people that they have been more than unkind, and unjust to their American brothers of African descent. The picture gives them a more human understanding, and love for the Negro. At the preview, I saw some of the nations most prominent critics in tears during the screening of "Imitation of Life." Louise Beavers cried. Louella Parsons, motion picture editor of Universal Service for all Hearst newspapers throughout the nation cried openly as I did, and others. I felt that a new high in humanitarianism had been reached among those great thinkers, and a better condition for the Negro, is bound to come."

The opus centers itself about the livelihood of two mothers, one white and the other colored; both struggling against cruel odds to earn their way honestly and rear their lovely little girls. Having the same object in view, the two parents become inseparable. Louise Beavers as Delilah of pancake fame the colored mother, and Claudette Colbert as Beatrice (Bea) Pullman, taking her husband's work as producer and dispenser of fine syrup, combine their talents and the former's romantic, loyal spirit with the latter's business sagacity and daring and together they rise to social and economic fame.

For a woman, what constitutes success in life? Is it measured by prosperity, or is it invested in the welfare of those she loves? The audience is given a chance to ponder this question as the screen unfolds the companion stories of a white woman and a black woman.

The two children live together like sisters; until the day comes when Jesse Pullman, played by Marilyn Knowlden, calls Peola, black. The Negro child having

this role is nine-year-old Dorothy Black. The breach of friendship widens with the years, causing "Peola Johnson," to leave the colored race, and "pass" for white. Although the situation puts an ache in both of the mothers hearts, their friendship still stands firm. Moreover, the thrifty momies continue to climb to national success by the secret receipt of Aunt Delilah's pancake flour, of which Ned Sparks, dead pan comedian of the screen, played as Elmer, is the hilarious agent.

When Jessie and Peola grow into their teens, filmfare will know them as Rochelle Hudson, and Fredi Washington. Rochelle is Caucasian, and Fredi is of African descent.

In order to try to adjust Peola to the colored race, she is sent to a high class Negro college in the south, but she soon runs away never being able to understand why she cannot go, and do normal things like white girls, inasmuch as her skin is just as white as theirs. In the meantime the storm clouds hover about the four principals, unmercifully. Jesse returns from boarding school, and falls in love with her mother's sweetheart, causing neither of them to marry the debonaire "Stephen Archer," played by Warren William. Aunt Delilah, dies of heart failure because she has lost Peola, and everything in general becomes so overbearing for the tragic families whose souls seemed to be torn apart that one can visualize material things as the "Imitation of Life."

Louise Beavers is easily the star of the picture and her acting is superb.

The music, the shorts and the "Three Step-sons", well known hoofers, all back up the screen presentation to the utmost.

## His Favorites



**HOLLYWOOD, Cal.**—Director Ed-  
die Stuttherland is shown here with  
"Five Cabin Kids," radio stars whom  
he is using in the picture "Missis-  
sippi," which he is now directing.

Left to right, around the circle are  
Fred, 4; James, 9; Helen, 10; Ruth,  
11; and Winifred, 8. Mr. Stutther-  
land is in the center. —Philadelphia  
Tribune Photo.

**HOLLYWOOD, Calif.**—Although  
there were a number of colored  
players in the cast, few colored  
citizens of Los Angeles attended  
the world premiere of "Imitations  
of Life" at the Pantages Hollywood  
Theatre.

With Klieg lights glaring and  
the usual autograph-hunters lin-  
ing the curb, patrons arrived early,  
waited in the lobby of the theatre  
for the arrival of stars.

Most of Universal studios' offi-  
cials and their plump wives stood  
around smoking, chatting and wait-  
ing for something.

### Queen for a Night

A hush fell over the place. All  
eyes turned toward the entrance.  
The "something" everyone was  
waiting for appeared. Surround-  
ed by two enormous white men and  
their wives was Louise Beavers,  
wearing a black lace gown and a  
lovely seal trimmed with summer  
ermine. Miss Beavers was queen  
for a night and Hollywood paid  
her homage.

Little Dorothy Black, her mommie,  
and Miss eBrnice Patton formed  
a party. Earl Dancer brought his  
Tiempo Club artists: Jennie L'Gon,  
Ruby Barbeem, Arthur Twyne.  
Theresa Harris was an attractive  
figure with Dr. Robinson and Ed-  
ward Thompson.

Evidently, the hundreds of col-  
ored people used in the funeral  
scene and those whose "bit" parts  
were cut out of the film: Sul Te-  
Wan, Paullyn Garner, Daisy Buf-

ford and others who refused to  
pay \$1.50, waited for the Central  
Avenue showing.

### "Bob" Is Hot Stuff

After the show, Miss Beavers  
and her managers and their wives,  
were pleasant patrons of Earl Dan-  
cer's Tiempo Club. Joining the  
party was a handsome young chap  
said to be Miss Beavers's sweetie,  
called only by the familiar title  
"Bob." It was to "Bob" that Miss  
Beavers sang "Someday Sweet-  
heart." It was "Bob" who lifted  
whiskey sours in toasts to Louise.

And it was "Bob" who took the  
wheel of Miss Beavers's new Cadil-  
lac sedan as the party disappeared  
into the fog early that morning.  
And a right handsome devil, that  
"Bob" is!

Theater 5-1934

Picture Films

# Critics Weep At The Preview Of "Imitation Of Life"

Courier Representative Only Sepia Invited to Private Showing of Stahl Masterpiece.

By BERNICE PATTON

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif., Dec. 6—Through the courtesy of the Universal Film Studio, I was privileged to attend the initial preview of John M. Stahl's spectacular filmization of Fannie Hurst's sensational novel, "Imitation of Life," which was shown in the executive private theater on the beautiful, veteran Universal Studio lot.

To say the opus is grand is putting it mildly. Probably, only the great Stahl could have brought to life such a masterpiece. The star setup was marvelous, and the acting of the adorable Claudette Colbert as well as Louise Beavers was superb.

The making of the picture has been a delicate task because the plot involves the social, and economic problem of the Negro. The kind, sympathetic Stahl, was a mighty brave man to produce the stirring, daring, drama. He took every precaution not to offend either race. Daily, on the set I saw him scrutinize the script religiously so that there was as little offense as possible. Throughout the screen version he struck out the word nigger. This film has a finesse of momies become inseparable friends; the great genius, and I hope throughout life, and no greater Negro is emancipated enough, and love to them is there on earth than true enough to himself to accept the truth; furthermore he must know that time, patience, faith in himself, education, efficiency, and finance are the salvation of prejudice.

Naturally, there are sequences in the film that will grieve my people, but I beg of them to be tolerant; use disgression in their thinking and grow into the industry that aims to erase the color-line. Don't spoil your economic advantages and possibilities in the movies by intolerant criticism. You must remember that this picture gives you your first real star, Louise Beavers, fabulous financial gains to the race, and opens the way for other Negro artists in the films.

I think, the epic really serves its purpose, inasmuch as it proves to white people that they have been more than unkind, and unjust to their American brothers of African descent. The picture gives them a

their teens, filmfare will know them as Rochelle Hudson, and Fredi Washington. Rochelle is Caucasian, and Fredi is of African descent.

In order to try to adjust Peola to the colored race, she is sent to a high class Negro college in the south, but she soon runs away never being able to understand why she cannot go, and do normal things like white girls, inasmuch as her skin is just as white as theirs. In the meantime, the storm clouds hover about the four principals, unmercifully. Jesse returns from boarding school, and falls in love with her mother's sweetheart causing neither of them to marry the debonaire "Stephen Archer," played by Warren William. Aunt Delilah, dies of heart failure because she has lost Peola, and everything in general becomes so overbearing for the tragic families whose souls seemed to be torn apart that one can visualize material things as the "Imitation of Life."

At the preview, Jean Armad editor of "Variety," introduced me to Miss Louella O. Parsons, motion picture editor of Hearst's publications throughout the nation, and of Europe. Her hearty greeting was most cordial as she clasped my hand, and said, "O, Miss Patton; I admire your paper; The Pittsburgh Courier, and your work is good." In reply I said, "Thank you; I am so happy to know you and I want to thank you for the generosity you give the Negro artist in your column." With still a firm handshake, she replied, "I am glad to do it because I think they are fine."

Prominent critics reviewing the preview were: Mr. Fraquhar, editor of the London Chronical, London, England; J. M. Ruddy of the Film Pictorial; Edward Churchill of the Movie Mirror; Douglas Churchill of the New York Times; Harry Burns of Filmgraph; Ralph Wilk of the Film Daily, New York; Bernice Patton, special correspondent of The Pittsburgh Courier America's Best Weekly, Joe Blain of Showman's Round Table; Jean Armand of Variety, Dan Thomas Newspaper Enterprise Association; Katherine Albert, and one of the world's most famous, and dearly loved, Miss Louella Parsons, movie picture editor of Universal Service for Hearst's publications.

In "Imitation of Life" (AA), the screen is extremely careful to avoid its most dramatic theme, obviously because it fears its social implications. The picture, based on a novel by Fannie Hurst, tells of two women, one white and one Negro, who were lifelong companions and successful business partners. It is the story of the white woman, her struggles and her loves, and her relations with her daughter, that supplies the chief material of the plot, and a reasonably conventional, completely safe-and-sane plot it is, too. The real story, the narrative which is merely hinted at, never really contemplated, is that of the beautiful and rebellious daughter of the loyal negro friend. She is light-skinned, sensitive, tempestuous; she grows bitterly indignant when she sees that the white girl with whom she has been reared is getting all the fine things of life while she is subjected to humiliation and unhappiness.

Obviously she is the most interesting person in the cast. Her drama is the most poignant, but the producers not only confine her to a minor and carefully handled subplot, but appear to regard her with a bit of distaste. They appear to be fond of her mother, because she is of the meek type of old-fashioned Negro that, as they say, "knows his place," but the daughter is too bitter and lacking in resignation for them. Thereupon they scold her for breaking her mother's heart by her rebelliousness, even tho to some it may seem that the mother had a way of forcing herself on her daughter which must have upset the nerves of the tragically neurotic girl. Anyway, the fate of this neglected character is considerably more interesting than the story of how her mother's partner made a success of her business, fell in love and eventually found that her daughter was her rival. The film takes so much time to sidestep its real theme that "Imitation of Life" is excessively long, despite some good comedy interludes.

In the small rôle of the negro daughter, the part which should have dominated the picture, Fredi Washington is vital, straightforward, and splendidly in earnest. The nominal leading character is attractively played by Claudette Colbert, and the senti-

mental negro mother is excellently characterized by Louise Beavers. Warren William is of no vast help as the love-interest, but Rochelle Hudson is a likable ingénue daughter.



A scene from "Imitation of Life"

# Hot-Cha Pictures Are Breaking Down Ascendancy Of White Race In Far Lands, British Paper States

BY PETTERSEN MARZONI

Now the list of crimes committed by Hollywood has been increased.

It is destroying the supremacy of the white race in India. Not content with corrupting the youth of this land and making busy-bodies view with alarm it has to slide its insidious evil into the far-flung British Empire.

At least that is what you are to believe if you read The Era, the London variation of New York's Variety. The charge of Hollywood influencing the mills of Ind takes up a whole column on the front page of the current issue of the publication, set in heavy black type.

Since the press hasn't had back-monks. There have been innumerable other films in which the color cast at Hollywood, it seems only fair to say, has been exploited for purposes either satiric or erotic. Before India is filmed on a comprehensive scale, with the possible addition of color, would it not be well for our government to make inquiries and take precautions with a view to seeing that the films contain nothing likely to cause further injury to British prestige among native races?

The editor of The Era has a better memory than ours. Never do we recall the question of color being discussed in a picture, and certainly no nude dancer ever appeared openly on an American screen.

"What happened to this film in the rest of the world we are unable to say, but it is only one of the many that have been steadily undermining the belief that there is an essential barrier between the white and colored races. Many American films are, in effect, propaganda for miscegenation though the attack is primarily aimed at the prestige of the white race, which in India, just now, is peculiarly at stake. Who can doubt but that much of the trouble in India has been caused by the complete destruction on the screen of the prestige of white women?"

"The white woman was once sacred, as far as native races were concerned, but her reputation has floundered in the mire of Hollywood's sex orgies, and the native is now more closely concerned, as one may read in the Indian Press, with preventing his daughters from going the same way as white women. The foundation of British rule in India was white prestige, which Hollywood has gone far to destroy, and Moscow's money is busily undermining what remains."

"We mention these matters because we notice that there is a movement to make films about India on an extensive and expensive scale, and we wonder what super-vision the British government intends to exercise over the productions? Will there be a love interest and will it touch in any way on the question of miscegenation? We recall an American talkie in which the white heroine told her native Indian lover that people didn't bother about color where she came from."

"We recall another effort in which a nude white girl danced exotically for the entertainment of Tibetan



Claudette Colbert and Louise Beavers in "Imitation of Life" appearing at Hamrick's New Music Box Theatre.

## LOUISE BEAVERS HAS BEST ROLE OF CAREER IN THE PROBLEM PICTURE, 'IMITATIONS OF LIFE'

"Imitations of Life," the widely discussed problem play, released by Universal Studios, starring Claudette Colbert and featuring Louise Beavers, the heavy role of "Delilah" in "Peppermint" is scheduled for an early showing in an Indianapolis colored theater next month, it was learned here this week.

The picture is claimed by some as being the medium through which colored stars of movieland will gain recognition.

The author of the above statement recently made a broad statement relative to Negroes in pictures. He said, "Every race is represented in the motion pictures but Negroes and some day I am going to produce a picture featuring a Negro."

Of course, Miss Louise Beavers, who has taken part in a number of Hollywood productions, takes the leading role in "Imitations of Life," as far as the racial angle is concerned, and has gained the honor as, being among the outstanding colored film artists in the country.

**In Pictures Eight Years**  
Miss Beavers, who was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, and has been in pictures for eight years, was chosen for the important mother role in the picture from a group of 200 colored women who tried out for the part. "Pete," as she is known by her intimate friends, made her debut in moviedom for Universal in 1927. She attracted the attention of the studio while a member of the Los Angeles Ladies Minstrels, and was called out to the lot for a "Mammy" part in Uncle Tom's Cabin. Miss Beavers was seen in some 7,000 feet of the 7,800 feet of film.

In "Imitations of Life," Miss

Beavers has one of her greatest assignments, and one of the most important ever held in a picture by a colored artist. The story practically weaves itself around her, the nucleus being her ability to make hot cakes, which later resulted in Miss Colbert stepping from a near penniless girl with woman and proprietor of a restaurant.



NINA MAE MCKINNEY & PAUL ROBESON  
They look like Africa but talk like England.

### Lascivious Ecstasy

The Federal prosecutor called it "unsuitable, immoral and lascivious, with adultery as its theme."

Defense counsel called it "as beautiful as anything ever filmed," insisted that "it teaches a lesson of life which is different from obscenity. . . ."

The picture was famed *Extase*, starring Austrian Hedy Kiesler, most popular cinema shown at the International Film Exposition in Venice year ago (TIME, Aug. 27). In ten reels containing only 300 words it tells the story of an unhappy bride's enthusiastic responses to a strange young man who meets her when she is enjoying a nude swim, seduces her in a nearby cabin. *Extase*, brought to the U. S. last November, was excluded under the Tariff Act by Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau after Mrs. Morgenthau had joined Government officials in inspecting it at a private showing (TIME, Jan. 14). Last week's trial in Manhattan was to determine whether Federal authorities had a right to confiscate and destroy the film.

Said U. S. District Judge John C. Knox, charging the jury: "The standards of the forests of Africa differ from those of certain European countries. . . ." A jury of bored business men watched a screening, deliberated 35 minutes, decided that *Extase* was too dirty for U. S. cinemaddicts.

### The New Pictures

**Sanders of the River** (London Films), an English effort to do for Africa what Hollywood in *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* did for India, is by far the most elaborate location picture yet turned out by a British studio. Zoltan Korda, brother of famed Producer-Director Alexander Korda, took an expedition to Africa, stayed there four months making background shots of the Congo River, tribal ceremonies among half a dozen brands of savages. At Shepperton-on-Thames, London Films' copy of an African village, complete with thatched huts, war canoes and burning-stake for prisoners, aroused so much excitement that the *Illustrated London News* devoted a whole page to reproducing it. To act in the story, derived from Edgar Wallace, Director Korda hired a high-grade black & white cast. Leslie Banks plays District Commissioner Sanders. Paul Robeson is Bosambo, a reformed convict who becomes chief of a small tribe. Nina Mae McKinney (*Hallelujah*) is his wife. The part of King Mofolaba, a scapegrace chief whose misdemeanors account for most of the action, is ably played by a 77-year-old Negro hair- tonic specialist named Toto Wane. When, inflamed by contraband gin, he executes a white man and then plots to kill and skin Paul Robeson, it is too much for Commissioner Sanders. He turns back from a contemplated trip to England, arrives via airplane, shoots King Mofolaba, rewards Robeson for

loyal assistance, by making him head chief of all the tribes in his district.

The fault most likely to creep into pictures made on location comes from their producers' natural reluctance to throw away bits of local color even when these impede their story. *Sanders of the River*, consequently, is full of native war dances, canoe-paddling, realistic spear-shaking and drum-beating which, no doubt interesting in a travelog, have no place in this narrative. It is distinguished by Michael Spolianski's curious but usually effective musical score, by Paul Robeson's vocalizations of lyrics which sound alarmingly like U. S. college football songs, and by Negro acting which is no less genuine because most of the performers have marked English accents.

Good shot: King Mofolaba, summoned to palaver with Sanders, arriving in a hammock with a slave carrying a chair for him to sit on when he gets out.

## Whites Want To Attend New Theatre

LYNCHBURG, Va.—A number of white residents here have sought admittance to the new Harrison Theatre here on Fifth Street which opened Monday, August 26, it was disclosed this week. Built on the site of the old Empire Theatre in the heart of the Negro business section of the city, the Harrison was planned exclusively for Negroes. Its construction was occasioned by the protest of certain race leaders here to the treatment accorded Negroes when "The Green Pastures" came to the Paramount.

Styled "Our Theatre" and judged "Virginia's finest Colored Theatre," its opening attracted overflowing crowds every night last week and every person who saw the pictures spoke in commendation of the comforts and conveniences provided by the management for the public. 9-7-35

No official word has been given by the management as to the admittance of whites. Since the theatre will not accommodate more than 450 patrons at the most, it is unlikely that whites will be admitted so long as Negroes give their patronage to the theatre.

H. A. M. Johns congratulated the management Monday evening of the opening for the conveniences provided for the public in a four minute opening address. He pointed out the benefits to be de-

rived from a theatre catering exclusively to our people. Dr. F. R. Trigg made brief remarks also.

## N. Y. ACTRESS SAYS NEGRO FILM PLAYERS FACE HOPELESS FUTURE WITH DIXIE HOLDING BOX OFFICE

### Hollywood Follows Southern Sentiment To An Amazing Degree She Learns In Discussion With Film Executives

By FAY M. JACKSON  
HOLLYWOOD, Cal., (ANP) — Making a quick survey of motion picture studios in Hollywood, Osceala Archer, accomplished actress, singer, interpretative dancer and brilliant writer, left Los Angeles with the firm conviction that American films will never offer very much more to the Negro player than he has already received.

"In fact," she said, in an exclusive ANP interview granted the writer while she stuffed her bags for a return to Harlem, "as long as the South is in the saddle, movies will continue to glorify Uncle Tom and give 'Imitations of Life.' " "It does not surprise me a bit that Al Jolson has been proposed to play 'De Lawd' in 'Green Pastures.' "

Blasting theories of race hopefuls that the miracle of undiscovered genius or a sudden swamping of studios with filmable material by and about Negroes, the actress, who has been associated with the Repertory Playhouse of New York and appeared on the Broadway stage in the Elmer Rice production, "Between Two Worlds" and Dana Burnet's "Strange House," laid all of the blame for retarded growth of race film actors directly on the doorstep of Southern box-office.

**Hollywood Apes South**  
Hollywood follows Southern sentiment to an amazing degree, I learned in discussions with film executives here," she continued. "The convictions of this ruling class on matters of race inferiority, social equality intermarriage, racial segregation, and employment discrimination affect every phase of our national life; and so precious are those tenets that they refuse to see them challenged even in the make-believe world of the theatre." Asked what she thought might be a remedy for the situation, Miss

Archer shook her head in despair. "Negro actors are at the mercy of a theatre and motion picture policy which is concerned with a philosophy which brands him as inferior, and he is practically helpless in altering this condition. He may refuse to play such parts as those described, such as he is customarily permitted to play, but there are, on the stage, for instance some five thousand unemployed members of Actors Equity, many of whom are clever enough to fill his place with the aid of grease paint."

That colored people in motion pictures make little attempt to raise their status was brought out by the dramatist.

"There is a beautiful lesson for Negroes in a story told by Anita Bloch in connection with the Theatre Guild's production of 'Rear Chin.' During the weeks in which the play was in the casting stage, hundreds of Chinese filed up to the casting office. Professional actors, students, doctors, laundrymen, Chinese gentlemen and coolies. Every one who applied for a part in 'Rear China' asked the casting director, 'Does this play do honor to my race?'

**Need Race Enterprises**  
"What a great day for the race when such unanimity and independence can be found among Negro actors!"

"Establishment of theatres and motion pictures owned and controlled by Negroes and free from any vestige of white domination would do more than emancipate the actor from the necessity of being cast always as a menial, a clown or a frustrated, incompetent intellectual infant."

"If we believe that we actually possess this great gift for drama which the white race readily concedes, we will regard it as a sacred obligation to our own generation

and to posterity to do what we can to hasten the day when these talents will find free expression, and when the Negro actor will no longer bear the brand of servility and inferiority, but be clothed in dignity."

It was twenty minutes before train-time when this mite of a woman whose relentless militancy rebels with giant-like force against all forms of domination by the ruling class ended the interview with the same snap and finality with which she caught the spirit of Hollywood and strode nonchalantly out of the room.

## Boston Group Protests Reissue of "Nation" Film

BOSTON, Mass.—The AFRO campaign to keep the Hollywood producers from re-making "The Birth of a Nation" into a film found hearty support from the provisional committee for equal opportunities, a local organization, this week.

The organization went on record against the film this week and dispatched the following letter to Will H. Hayes, president of the Motion Pictures Producers and Distributors of America, Inc.:

Dear Sir:  
The Provisional Committee for Equal Opportunities, composed of representative organizations and individuals in the community, has been informed that the film, "Birth of a Nation" is about to be reproduced with sound.

We vehemently protest against the showing of this base film in which the propaganda of race hatred is so vividly displayed.

The efforts of the colored people to meet the constant, insidious attacks made against them in the press and film will rise to tremendous heights if this film is ever released to the American public.

We call upon you, therefore, to use your office for the purpose of preventing this poisonous and riot-inciting film from being produced or distributed.

PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE  
FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.

John S. R. Bourne, chairman.  
Walter Foster, secretary.

# Trapped Into Role Of 'Uncle Tom' In 'Sanders Of River'

West Indians And Africans Score  
'Bosambo' Musical Comedy Production

## BITTER TALK

Picture Ranked  
Very Low By  
Critics

(Defender Staff Correspondent)  
CAPE TOWN, South Africa, Oct. 4.—(By Mail)—Has Paul Robeson been tricked in his role of "Bosambo" in the moving picture, "Sanders of the River?" This is the all-engrossing subject of debate here following acquisition of the film by a company which has few, if any non-European picture theatres.

The Race community had anxiously been awaiting the chance to see Paul Robeson in pictures for the first time. The talkie was shown recently at the Royal theatre here. Since its showing in this one instance controversy as to whether the picture is really what members of the Race expected is raging.

Tom Wells, an American newspaper man and playwright, places grave doubts on this aspect. In the "Liberator" he says Robeson has been tricked to play his role contrary to the original ideas which the picture should have expressed.

"It is most unfortunate that Paul Robeson was trapped by the producers into playing the shameless Uncle Tom role of Bosambo," the journalist states.

"However, it was heartening to know that when he recognized how he was duped, he registered his protest at the premier showing of the film in England."

Robeson was said to have played with the intention of portraying aspects of African culture and customs.

"After Robeson finished acting," continued Mr. Wells, "the producers mutilated the film in such a way that it gave an entirely different impression from what Robeson had been led to believe he rendered.

HOLLYWOOD—Plans are being made by Paramount for a street musical starring an all-colored cast. The name for the vehicle, which has been conceived and developed by Ernst Lubitsch, is the "Chocolate Princess." Lubitsch will supervise the production also.

All of the biggest colored names in the field of stage, vaudeville and radio will be signed up for the picture which is scheduled to go into production early next spring.

## EARL DANCER TALKS OF US IN PICTURES

By C. CECIL CRAIGNE

We had a talk with Earl Dancer Monday night. Mr. Dancer, whose name is familiar to devotees of the stage, has been in the show business for a quarter of a century and is still—from all appearances—quite a young man and happens to be in Chicago because his protegee and ward, Jeni LeGon, of whom we suppose you've heard and perhaps seen some time, is appearing at a downtown bright spot.

His talk for the most part was of Miss LeGon, perhaps the greatest of recent Race "finds" in the theatrical world. But we were interested in some other aspects of Hollywood which we knew he could give us.

We were able to glean from him some of the information we desired, but not until he had told of Miss LeGon's sailing for London, November 17, to appear in Cochran's Revue, which is to England what Ziegfeld's Follies in their heyday were to the United States.

In this revue which is scheduled to open Christmas Day, the charming 19-year-old Chicago lass will appear as one of the principals

along with Nick Long, for whom she not been exploited by the Race and will supply comedy relief.

But getting back to that which might be opportunity lurking. we most eagerly sought of Mr. Mr. Dancer, who is something of Dancer, he had this to say of Holly—a pioneer of the Race in the movie wood and the Race:

"It offers unlimited possibilities for the "Birth of a Nation," which for talented members of the Race was produced way back in the early providing they can get the support days of the silver screen, had these of the group which has not been, words to say in closing which we noticeable so far."

Representation Lacking  
Developing this subject, he who American stage is established. It has acted in executive capacities has been brought about by his own for several of the leading picture original contributions and ability to companies, assisting in the produc-present that which the public de-tion of some of the leading cine-mands and because if the movies are matic hits, decried first of all the to be authentically representative lack of adequate representation of of American life, the Negro can't the Race press in Hollywood. be ignored because he is integrally American"

He called the names of several Hollywood correspondents of the Race whom he felt to be impossible as intelligent representatives of the group, able to converse and act intelligently as representing a group of leading publications should.

"This," he said, "is one of the principal reasons why the Race press has been unable to realize more in a financial way from its efforts in this direction."

He was even more critical, however, of the average Race theatre-goer. In answer to our question as to whether other pictures of the type of "Imitation of Life" would be made he had little encouragement to offer.

"The colony," he said, "is only casually aware that there are almost 20,000,000 members of the Race in this country. What it does not realize at all," he informed us, "is that in proportion to its numbers, it is the most movie going group in the nation."

"The only comments, for the most part, received by Hollywood producers from members of the Race are those registering objections to insults—real or imaginary—to the group. In other words, all the Race movie fan seems to be able to offer is onions—never once an orchid."

Race Not Responsive

"If more were to write in expressing pleasure at the performance of a Race star and asking that he be given greater opportunities there is no doubt but that it would have pleasing results. There is no way of Hollywood's knowing, except by the fan mail received by its stars, as to how they are 'clicking' with the public. Box office receipts, of course, play their part, but with Negroes cast in minor roles, it is assumed that it is the stars and not the black minors who are swelling the tills of magnates."

This throws, then, the responsibility for the success of Race artists in Hollywood right in the lap of each and every member of the Race.

He had words of commendation for all of the Race actors and actresses in Hollywood with whom Mr. and Mrs. Movie Goer are familiar and even spoke of several not so well known at present.

Other Opportunities

There are other avenues in Hollywood aside from acting which have

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# THE NEGRO ACTOR IS IN A DILEMMA, DECLARES THE WELL-KNOWN ARTIST IN BRILLIANT PAMPHLET

LOS ANGELES, Calif., Jan. 10. (ANP)—"I believe," says Clarence Muse, veteran film player and one of the race's best known and respected actors, "there is an audience among the whites large enough to support some real efforts by the Negro actor."

Mr. Muse's assertion is contained in a pamphlet entitled "The Dilemma of the Negro Actor." The remarks made in it were the gist of an address to a group of artists and writers at the California Art Club some time ago.

## Still a Novelty

"The Negro actor is still a novelty to the American theatre. He is accepted as a clever entertainer aboard, but has no definite place in the international theatre."

"As yet," Mr. Muse writes, "he has not been received by theatre audiences as a serious dramatic force. There are two audiences in America to confront—the white audience with a definite desire for the buffoonery and song, and the Negro audience with a desire to see the real elements of Negro life portrayed."

## For Sake of Race Pride

"He would love, for the sake of race pride, to satisfy and entertain his colored admirers but the call of the mighty dollar of the white race compels his attention."

White America controls the destiny of the Negro actor. The call of blood controls his hidden ambitions. Hence the dilemma of the Negro actor.

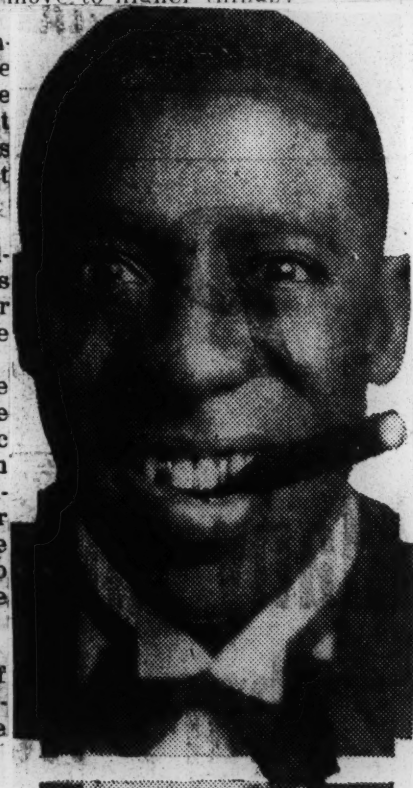
"One question which would be the most valuable contribution to the American stage—the work of the Negro actor who artistically develops the slave characters demanded by the white audiences, or the work of the Negro actor who presents the stuff of the Afro-American of today?"

## No Definite Place

"That the Negro actor has no definite place in the international theatre is evident. He has been received as an entertainer and singer of folk songs abroad. Dancing the foreign countries can understand the melody of the songs is soothing to their ears, but the limited language of Negro drama makes his position weak. American dialect will never be understood abroad. It is also so limited

that one must even in America guess the true meaning of such expressions.

"The dilemma of the Negro actor still exists. He is perplexed—two audiences, white and black. What shall he do if he wants to move to higher things?"



CLARENCE MUSE

## Britain Calls Film Couple Joan Bennett, Gene Markey May Go Over For Picture

BY LOUELLA O. PARSONS

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 7.—Joan Bennett and Gene Markey are working feverishly to try to keep an engagement in England. It's a job, of course. British cinema is begging Gene to come to London and adapt the Duer Miller play, "Come Out of the Kitchen" for the movies. And they want Joanie to star in Mrs. Miller's drama. The thing that intrigues the Markeys most is the chance to work together. What a script Gene could

write for his blond wife and she feels she could do her best with Gene's dialogue. So-o-o, Hollywood may lose the Markeys temporarily while they make one movie in England.

Why is it that anything that Sam Goldwyn does becomes competitive? He always has the world wondering who will direct his pictures, who will play in them and each time we, like the rest of the world, fall and get interested. Perhaps that is because Sam does make good pictures. He tells me now that Sydney Franklin will direct "Dark Angel," which he will produce as soon as the Anna Sten picture is finished. Now comes the guessing contest again. Who will take the parts that Ronald Colman and Vilma Banky had in the silent picture?

Snapshots of Hollywood: Ruth Chatterton looking supremely happy these days; so is Jose Iturbi, famous pianist; all their friends say it's a romance; Connie Deyton Simpson, socialite, sporting the only lorgnette ever seen at the Hollywood fights stadium; she divided her time between gazing at the fighters and looking into Jack LaRue's eyes; they occupied ringside seats; Clarence Muse, negro genius, and composer of "When It's Sleepy Time Down South," booked for personal appearance here at the Paramount, in New York and later in Europe; the new fiesta room at the Ambassador to be opened Jan. 19 for the next Mayfair party; Ernst Lubitsch in charge of eats, already conferring with the Ambassador chef; Hal Wallis and Louise Fazenda planning a ranch house that will be something; they have decided to live in the country and bring Hal, Jr., up to be a farmer; Victor Varconi another who plans to lead the simple life; he and Mrs. Varconi are planning to buy a ranch; Vina Del Mar, her typewriter and secretary in Palm Springs, working in the sunshine; Janet Beecher, her sister Olive Wyndham and their mother, also enjoying the desert warmth. Marion Marsh still on the sick list, unable to report at the studio. That's all today. See you tomorrow!

# SEES NOTHING UNUSUAL IN INTERRACE STORY

## Calls It 'Hollywood In Disguise'

NEW YORK.—Will Rogers, famous comic writer, in recent article differed with white and Negro critics on "Imitation of Life." Of this famous picture Rogers says:

"Despite the great praise showered on 'Imitation of Life' by the white and the colored critics, I find it, to a considerable extent, just some more of Hollywood, and an imitation of life indeed. This is no reflection on the players, most of whom, colored and white, were sincere and splendid. Louise Beavers, as I have said before, really doesn't have to act. She just is in. The defects are in the plot, in the gestures made to preserve 'social equality,' or at least an appearance of it."

"In this play, so far as it is of special interest to colored folk, a light-colored girl, who wishes to be white, disowns her black mother, first, before her white school companions, once again is a restaurant, where she is employed as a cashier, and finally leaves her altogether. Well and good. Such things do happen. I have not heard much of this in the United States, but it is not infrequent in the West Indies and South America."

"The black mother, Louise Beavers, as Aunt Delilah, has made a fortune in conjunction with a white woman, Claudette Colbert, selling pancakes and pancake flour. Both women are most touchingly attached to each other. They place this love and the affection for their respective daughters above all thoughts of money and worldly goods. Now what happens when this black mother is dying of a broken heart at her daughter's desertion? She pauses in her grief, and her whole face glows. Why? Because she is going to find rest in heaven? No, she is seeing the wonderful funeral she will have with all the lodges in full regalia, strutting down main street while the bands blare the funeral march. The dying woman gives minute orders for this parade and then turns up her heels."

"Now let us suppose that a white heroine in any play stopped to gloat over her gorgeous funeral in this supreme moment of grief, what

would any critic, however much of an imbecile, have said? Yet critics lauded this play inordinately. Would any mother, except a Negro mother created in a Nordic brain, ever have done this? A clown must be made of the Negro even in the depth of his anguish to evoke laughter from white audiences and snickers from Negro ones."

"Again, here, as I said, are two women, one white, the other black, deeply attached to each other, not to mention that they are business partners. What happens when both go in search of the ungrateful colored daughter? The black woman rides with the chauffeur, while the white one rides alone in the back. In real life these two sorrowing women would have continued to forget color and have ridden together. But on the screen that would be 'social equality.'"

"Further, when the repentant colored daughter flings herself on her mother's bier, and is led away by the white woman and her daughter, the colored girl is again placed beside the chauffeur and care is taken that she should be shown, not beside the three other people in the car, but ahead of them. Now in real life what would have happened? Such a white mother as that portrayed in this story would have clasped the grief-stricken colored girl to her breast, have seated her beside her in the car, and endeavored to console her. But to give it this human touch would have been guilty of a breach of 'social equality.' Yet, the title, 'Imitation of Life' applies equally to the plot as to color prejudice in America."

"This picture, nevertheless, is significant. It shows that Hollywood has at last realized that there is a color problem. Moreover, it might also learn that featuring Negro actors in others than clown parts, pays. Colored people simply poured into the Harlem theatre in which this picture was shown, and after a time the number of standers exceeded the sitters."

# MINISTER RAPS 'IMITATION OF LIFE' AS SUBTLE PROPAGANDA

## Sees It As Being Against Race

CLEVELAND, O., Jan. 25.—Before one of the largest congregations ever massed at a Sunday morning service at historic Mt. Zion Temple Congregational church, Rev. Horace White, pastor, played the current Universal film success, "Imitation of Life," as the most subtle bit of propaganda recently from Hollywood against the American Negro and his fight to prove his sufficiency and fitness as an American citizen.

Rev. White's criticism came on the eve of the third successive weekly run of this photoplay at the Alhambra theatre following a one week's stay down town. The picture, starring Louise Beavers and Fredi Washington, has established somewhat of a local record; crowds have surged in and out of the theatre foyer for the past two weeks and on many occasions not even standing room has been available. The theatre management has tried to accommodate its clients by advising matinee attendance.

In view of this wide interest Rev. White decided to see why this film had caught the fancy of so many theatre-goers. He saw it twice and then read the Fannie Hurst novel from which it was adapted. At last week's services he announced that his sermon to be the following week would be on "Imitation of Life." The local press played it up during the week. Sunday morning the biggest crowd in many a Sunday came out in the rain to hear the message.

### Play a Paradox

"The picture at first struck me as being quite impressive. It was not altogether true to life, it certainly was entertaining and the characters were splendidly costumed. Upon second thought, however, I felt that there was something definitely real and also something definitely unreal about the performance. It was no more than its title suggested—a mere imitation of life. I observed that the producer had displayed some courage, which is more than they usually do, but not enough for the production to be entirely realistic. Unfortunately, he had to keep an eye upon the box office. Consequently, he sought to preserve intact the white man's concepts of social equality; but in so doing he ignored the many common human passions, sorrows and sufferings the intensity of which

haps, this psychology characterized the masses of Negroes in the 19th century. My message to the young people of this country is for you to forget the lessons of inferiority complex which your elders have so well learned and to free yourselves of the incidents and experiences inherent in the development of such a complex.

### Peola Is Unreal

"Peola is unrealistic, a myth. There are no such Negroes who would give up wealth and respect simply to be a white cashier. Thousands and thousands of fair complexioned Negroes go over to the other side each year for the sake of better economic livelihood, but there are millions of other fair ones who remain among us proud of their affinity and who contradict each day of their life the doctrine that the white man is superior simply because he is white."

Rev. White paused for a moment. Then he directed the attention of his congregation to the scene where Miss Be. Delilah and Elmer are planning to incorporate their pancake industry. The scene closes with Elmer's laconic characterization of Delilah. "Once a pancake always a pancake!" "Delilah is not a 19th century Negro," continued the minister. "She's a thing of the past. She represents the Negro as an underdog. And she is subservient because she wants to be and not because of the white man. Such a psychology shows that the Negro is unfit for proving his right to American citizenship."

## EARL DANCER TO HOLLYWOOD AS PRODUCER

Call 2-22-35  
Made Associate of Felix Young of the RKO Film Studios

By Fay M. Jackson

HOLLYWOOD, Cal.

A new chapter was written in the pages of Negro film

history when Earl Dancer was installed in RKO studios this week as associate to Felix Young, producer.

Long associated with the entertainment world as a producer of lavish musical extravaganzas glorifying the brownskin girl and often discovering and developing unusual talent among Negro performers, Dancer is known from coast to coast for his versatility and resourcefulness in arranging shows for the legitimate stage. He is credited with having started Ethel Waters out on her career and was, himself, one of the first Negroes to appear on Broadway in some of its biggest box office attractions of several years ago.

### Associate to Producer

In his new duties as associate to Mr. Young, producer of the RKO musical, "Hooray for Love," Dancer will cast from 50 to 500 specialty acts and extras in the Brooks, Old Man Dancer's choir of 100 voices, 30 beautiful brownskin and is not only responsible for the whole unit but the idea around which the sequence is built as well.

Previous to affiliating with RKO studios, Dancer worked with Mr. Young at Columbia in a like capacity, although unofficially. It was there, while production of "Spring 3100," which later received the title "Jealousy," was in process that Young became impressed with his ability and promised that if he ever made another picture Dancer would be with him.

Comment on Dancer's appointment is to the effect that for once Negro players, instead of being caricatured, will be presented authentically and artistically. His presence at RKO during the filming of Miss LeGon's first feature is likely to be expected to assure her of being presented differently than any other Negro girl has been presented in films.

Interviewed in his offices on the lot, Dancer made the following statement outlining his plans and purposes for LeGon and "Hooray for Love":

### Praises Felix Young

"It is a rare privilege to be associated with a producer like Felix Young. His past successes point to the forthcoming picture as one of more crowning event in a career of distinctive contributions to America's entertainment and certainly to the motion picture industry.

"Through my past experiences and the few 'tricks' I may be able to give, I hope to present Jeni LeGon differently than any other colored girl has been presented in films. We shall have the correct atmosphere, 131st street and Seventh avenue, in Harlem, proper music, songs, dances, color moods and other technical features to assure the presentation of a 1935 colored girl, not a caricature of the past. We aim to present all our talent

on the screen in this picture so both whites and Negroes will find them diverting and entertaining. The Negroes will find them so because they will recognize that we are portraying one of them as he is and not as prejudiced views force him to be. The whites will find them so because we shall show a new Negro and an entertaining Negro and, I hope a much more interesting Negro."

Perhaps the largest cast of specialty acts ever used in movies will be featured in this Negro sequence of "Hooray for Love." With Jeni LeGon and Bill (Bojangles) Robinson heading the list, the Brownies, Rutledge and Taylor, the dancings; Three Rhythm Rockets, Four Blackbirds, a radio act; Eddie Anderson, who made the fan dance with turkey feathers famous on the coast; Willa Mae Lane, film musical, "torrid torch singer and a favorite at Sebastian's night club; Jessie Brooks, Old Man Dancer's choir of 100 voices, 30 beautiful brownskin chorines, as many dancing chorus boys and a full sized Negro orchestra with Dancer wielding the baton.

White stars, drawn from stage and screen success will be Fred Keating, Wynne Gibson, Lionel Stander, Patsy Kelley and others.

Asked what effect his position with the studio would have on the masses of players in general, he said: "It means that Negro talent, instead of so much Negro types will be brought to the fore. Assuring both originality and authenticity in this sequence, we have conceived a story in song, dance and moods of Harlem and its folks. The masses of extra players will embrace singers, dancers and specialty folk and will offer something new to the single act, used for its voice and ability to portray characterizations through pantomime.

### Introduced New Types

"The same is true of the dancers and specialty acts which as a group will introduce an entirely different Negro to the studio.

"Heretofore," Dancer continued, "Negroes in motion picture mob scenes have been picked purely because of color and texture of hair but Negro extra players in this sequence will be selected because of their talent, regardless of color or hair or any other external features.

"In all fairness to the studios using large numbers of colored players, it is not that they haven't used Negroes because they did not want to, but they did not know where to lay hands on them when needed and I have been fortunate enough to have been in direct contact with all Negro talent from coast to coast with the result that it is easy for me to lay hands on the specific people we need. There will be no restrictions to a minimum wage, either. All players will

be paid in accordance with their importance to the sequence." The fact that Earl Dancer or any other Negro of his qualifications and intelligence has been placed in authority on matters of racial interest bespeaks a decided mark of progress and advancement of Negro artists in filmdom.

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## The Age Readers Forum

Communications addressed to the Editor will be printed in this column, if they bear the name and address of the writer. The opinions or theories advanced are those of the writer, and are not to be considered as reflecting the policy of The New York Age.

### Oberlin Students Turn Thumbs Down On Showing Of "Imitation Of Life"

Editor The New York Age:

Despite the very wide acclaim of the film "Imitation of Life" Oberlin students have very definitely rejected it. The following letter was recently addressed to the manager of the local theatre:

Mr. Jerome Steele,  
Apollo Theater,  
Oberlin, Ohio.

We, who are students in the Graduate School of Theology, Conservatory and Oberlin College, do hereby petition that you do not bring to your theater the picture entitled "Imitation of Life."

As stated in the "Crisis" a magazine subscribed for by the College and placed upon the open racks in the library: "From beginning to end this picture is full of vicious anti-Negro propaganda."

It is an insult to our common intelligence and to the ideals for which we are working.

We appreciate the fine efforts which you always put forth in bringing to Oberlin the best in pictures. We assure you that you will lose nothing by ignoring this picture."

This letter was signed by an overwhelming majority of the colored students on the campus, both graduates and undergraduates.

Such a stand on our part must not be construed as a criticism in any way of either Miss Beavers or Miss Washington. We are well aware that they are artists—artists whose opportunities for advancement are pitifully slight. They must take the roles assigned and they must act them as they are directed. I am of the opinion that

both Miss Beavers and Miss Washington would agree with all that we have said, but they can do nothing about it.

Oberlin has always stood behind and encouraged the Negro in art. One of the conservatory societies brought "Emperor Jones" here last year and made much over the fact that Paul Robeson was in the title role.

We were forced into an apologetic explanation of the psychology of the picture. But there was a psychology to explain and the magnificent voice of Paul Robeson soared above even sordid situations.

In this case our tired brains fall back before the problem of attempting an explanation of such a mother as Delilah. Where in all the world will you find a black mother so stupid, so blind to the welfare of her child that she will thus utterly throw away her future and her happiness? We're proud of our mothers. We see them stretching back of us a long line of deep bodied, proud, black women who have given of the last ounce of their strength and being that we might come into the full share of manhood and womanhood. They've never taught us to accept a "basement" standard.

Nor, do we care to try to explain a colored girl in the City of New York (where the picture is laid) and who (we are led to suppose) is well supplied with funds, spending her evenings hanging around a basement staircase trying to catch a glimpse of the "white folks' party. Imagine such a thing in New York!

Our stand is not intended as a direct criticism of the book "Imitation of Life" by Fannie Hurst. One lays aside the book feeling that the author, though mistaken in some of her concepts, yet has attempted to dramatically set forth one phase of the American problem. I did not like the book, though it does have excellent spots. And Miss Hurst does use logic which is wholly lacking in the picture. Peola's final decision to turn white comes because she has fallen deeply in love with a white man who wants to make her his wife. This is a well-worn theme, but at least it does offer

a reason. But in the play, Peola simply wants to be "white." Now, it is a well known fact that colored people in America only "pass" for two reasons: Because of economic advantages and because a member of our race happens to be in love with a member of the white race. But it is also known that these two reasons are rapidly disappearing.

No, Delilah is an insult to the mothers of our race and Peola throws a contemptuous veil across the young women who are today striving towards and demanding the best of life. We don't want the fact that Paul Robeson was "Imitation of Life" in Oberlin. We are working too hard to obtain the real thing.

SHIRLEY GRAHAM.

Oberlin, Ohio.

## NEW MACON THEATRE TO OPEN DOORS APRIL 29

Of interest to people throughout Macon County and in neighboring towns will be the opening of the new "Macon" Theatre, on April 29, the Tuskegee's new Macon Theatre is something for the citizens of Tuskegee to be proud of. So far as we have been able to learn it is the only theatre of its kind in the world. All of the equipment that is being installed is new, such as upholstered spring cushions, all aisles carpeted, the booth equipment is the best that money can buy. Simplex Projection machines, with Western Electric Sound, rest rooms for colored and whites, the interior is being decorated by highly trained men who have specialized in this kind of work. The heating and cooling system is the most modern and up to date that can be secured and is operated automatically so as to keep an even temperature at all times. The theatre can never get too hot or too cold.

It is the last word in comfort, convenience and beauty. More modern than even the Paramount, and other big city theatres, in that the equipment is of latest, more improved type. No expense has been spared to make it the most comfortable picture show to be found in any town this size.

It is expected that many visitors from out of town will avail themselves of the very fine programs that have become the regular order, and not the exception, under the management of Mr. Ralph Bhaswell.

Will Rogers in "Life Begins at Forty" will be the opening bill, and Wallace Beery in "West Point of the Air" will be shown the opening

week also, as well as other features. Mr. Braswell and his assistants (sixteen in number) are to be congratulated upon the most attractive place to spend their hours of business.

## FIGHT PICTURES AT LAFAYETTE

### Frank Schiffman Gets Only Film in Harlem Of Great Bout

The energetic Frank Schiffman of the Brecher Theatrical Combine controlling a number of theatres in Harlem, among them the Lafayette, Harlem Opera House, Apollo, Roosevelt, Odeon, Douglas and Lincoln, has secured the original fight pictures of the Louis-Carnera bout and they are being shown at the Lafayette Theatre.

This will give the other thousands of Harlemites who did not get to the Stadium an opportunity of seeing how the Brown Bomber disposed of the Vanishing Venetian.

The pictures were secured through the Twentieth Century Athletic Club and were William Randolph Hearst, representing the Milk Fund, and the better part of the proceeds from the showing of the film will be added to the large amount already being given from the profits of the sensational encounter of the two great ring men on Tuesday night.

The pictures are unusually clear,

and again The Amsterdam News has scooped every Negro newspaper in the country with this bit of information as it was said that no pictures were taken of the fight. The Lafayette will be the only house showing them in Harlem, and Broadway is having its chance to cash in at one of the other houses downtown.

# Duplex Theater Is Success



The only theater of its kind in the world has just been completed at Tuskegee, Ala., by Tucker & Howell, Atlanta architects. It is really two theaters in one, with one section for white patrons and the other for negroes. It has separate lobbies, waiting rooms and auditoriums. Twin projection rooms enable the theater operators to show the feature film in one auditorium while the comedies and newsteel are being shown in the other. Thus there is no intermingling of races whatever and at the same time operating expenses are halved.

## NEWEST THEATER IDEA IS OF ATLANTA ORIGIN

**Separate Audiences See  
Same Show in House at  
Tuskegee, Ala.**

A motion picture theater destined to serve as a model for future amusement houses in the south, designed by Tucker & Howell, Atlanta architects, has been opened in Tuskegee, Alabama.

The new theater, built and completely equipped at a cost of \$45,000, is really two theaters in one, with a total seating capacity of 800 persons.

The theater is divided into two sections, one for white patrons and the other for negro, and each is complete in itself, with separate box offices, lobbies, rest rooms and auditoriums. Both sections, however, are under one roof.

Twin projection rooms are used, separated by a fire-proof door, and under the present method of operation when the feature picture is being shown in the white section, comedies

and a news reel are being shown in the negro division.

Through this method the theater operators are able to provide for both white and negro patrons with the same show, and at the same time do away with even the semblance of any intermingling of the two races.

The Tuskegee theater has been named the Macon, inasmuch as Tuskegee is located in Macon county, Alabama. It is owned by Oscar Oldknow and has been in operation since April 28.

The firm of Tucker & Howell drew the plans for the Macon and supervised its construction. The same firm is supervising the building of motion picture theaters in Manchester, Ga., Atlanta and several other southeastern cities.

"The Macon theater is, I believe, absolutely unique," M. A. Tucker, senior member of the architectural firm, said yesterday. "It enabled the owner, Mr. Oldknow, to serve two classes of patrons without any intermingling and yet use the same set of films."

"This type of theater is ideally adapted to the south and I believe many of them will be built below the Mason-Dixon line, in the years to come."

## "IMITATION OF LIFE"

*Christy Beavers*  
We saw the other night the much heralded picture called "Imitation of Life." Our reaction was not as favorable as much of the publicity which we have read and which was evidently paid for, in the newspapers.

"Imitation of Life" appeared to us to be subtle propaganda rather than a great production of art. We are told that it is far different from the novel by that name written by Fannie Hurst. Without a doubt it preserves a fast disappearing train of the slave Negro. The docility of Aunt Delilah, the leading character, cannot be found to-day in the modern Negro of the intelligence which she showed. However lovable and attractive the servile attitude of this character appears, it is not something which is to be held up to the modern generation of Negroes struggling for their place in American life. Next to the docility, is the presumption that the light-skinned Negro wants to be white. We very seriously challenge this statement. In all of our career we have never met a character like Peola. The Negro who is light enough to want to be white is usually clever enough to be white. He or she is more white than black and naturally has a choice of which ever race he or she desires, and it is estimated that there are at least a million of this type of people who are to-day white and a great many of them with the consent and thorough understanding of their parents and their friends. The deification of white and the insinuation that Negroes want to be white is propaganda which appeals to the self-conceit of white people. The play is naturally popular because it panders to this prejudice. We can see nothing uplifting about it for colored people.

And what is more, "Imitation of Life" stands for Green Pastures which depicts the type of religion which the world has forgotten though it lingers as a religion of childhood. Many older people get a thrill out of it because it brings back pleasant memories of innocent days, but in-so-far as it is the characterization of the religion of the Negro, it is only a caricature. There is nothing in it except the childlike faith which is of no benefit to Black People.

Why then do Negroes rave over it so much? The first reason is the paid publicity, and the second reason is that two of the cleverest actors in the country have been hired to do the work—Richard B. Harrison and Louise Beavers. As a piece of pure dramatics, both of them do a fine piece of work hardly excelled. Still the Negro has more and more to take the attitude of the Jews in relation to the dramatics which he patronizes. There is perhaps no cleverer play than "The Merchant of Venice." Shakespeare reaches the heights of real comedy in his treatment of the character of Shylock. But every Jew is taught from the very beginning that that is an insult to his race and no Jewish writer will have played the "Merchant of Venice" and no Jewish actor would take the part of Shylock. In many cases the Jews have petitioned the city authorities to prevent the "Merchant of Venice" from being played in city theatres on the ground that it was anti-Jewish propaganda.

No one doubts the master craftsmanship of the "Merchant of Venice," but the better the play the worse the propaganda, the better the acting the more damaging the effect. It is no argument to say that Shakespeare did not mean anything against the Jews; it is what the play does. And so more and more the Negro ought to look to the theatre and the moving-picture shows to select the things that are helpful and to reject the vicious propaganda.

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## Hollywood Showing Interest in Negro

Many Colored Actors Now  
Trekking to Film Colony  
Seeking Recognition

CHICAGO, Ill., Nov. 14 (ANP.)—

Negro actors, both from here and elsewhere, have been trekking to Hollywood in ever increasing numbers lately and for a mighty good reason. The nation's film capital is going bronze in a big way. All major studios there are planning films to include colored performers. The leader, of course, is "Green Pastures," which naturally calls for a sepia cast. Most of the others hanging fire are musicals with mixed performers. Ernst Lubitsch at Paramount has a pet idea—scheduled calling for 80 per cent of the cast to be selected from the darker members of the acting profession.

At Radio a black and white musical has been pending for some time. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer is planning a similar piece. Twentieth Century Fox has the musical idea with Bill Robinson and Stepin Fetchit in mind, and also has another with a strictly southern Negro angle.

Columbia's "Georgianna" will have several colored in the cast, as well as Universal's "Show Boat." Paramount's "So Red the Rose," just completed, has three in featured spots. The new Al Jolson picture at Warners is using Cab Calloway and his band.

"Porgy and Bess" has been looked over by Emanuel Cohen for Columbia. Cohen is to make his recommendations to Harry Cohn of that company this week and if Columbia takes the play, it will be an Emanuel Cohen production.

Part of the revived interest is traced directly to "Sanders of the River," starring Paul Robeson and Nina Mae McKinney, which has done rather sketchy business in U. S. houses, but nevertheless has surprised Hollywood producers by its reception. The film is British made.

Fear of what Dixie will say has caused the film colony to steer clear of the Negro angle. The first all-sepia picture was Fox's "Hearts in Dixie," produced in 1929. Later Metro made "Hallelujah," which got plenty of raves from the critics but few shekels in the box offices.

Hollywood, in taking on this new

program, has an eye for Europe where Negro stars have been the vogue now for a good many years. It is figured any drop in Dixie business will be more than offset by increased showings across the Atlantic. Incidentally, two studios are beckoning to Josephine Baker, now in New York.

## CALIFORNIA IS SELECTED FOR BIG PART

Screen Actor Gets Leading  
Part in 'Green Pastures' Film

LOS ANGELES. — Cliff (Rex) Ingram, well known screen actor and also stage performer of note, has been given the role of "De Lawd" in the filmization of Marc Connelly's "The Green Pastures" which is now being cast.

Ingram's selection for the coveted role made famous on the stage by the late Richard B. Harrison came after numerous candidates had been considered including Charles Winter Wood, Mr. Harrison's understudy of the part in the stage production; the Rev. E. Clayton Powell of New York and many others.

Ingram is large in stature, standing 6 feet 2 inches in height and weighing around 220 pounds. It is believed he was selected by Connelly due to his screen experience. Ingram is now in New York but is expected here shortly to begin work on the picture which is slated to start shooting on January 2, if current plans go through.

Played "Crown" in Porgy  
He is noted for his stage work almost as much as for his movie portrayals. His portrayal of the role Crown in the stage play, "Porgy," gained him considerable favorable comment. He also came in for much publicity for his excellent dramatization of the part of Blacksnake in the play "Stevadore." George Jean Nathan, premier Broadway critic, lauded Ingram highly in a long article in Esquire magazine. Ingram's picture accompanied the story.

One of the most outstanding screen roles played by Ingram here was the romantic lead in "Hearts in Dixie," one of the first all-Negro pictures produced by a major studio here. He played opposite the late Mildred Washington.

He has been doing screen work approximately 15 years. Way back in the silent film days when actors all had to act their lines without the benefit of speech, Ingram was learning the camera angles which aided him considerably upon the advent of the talkies.

Connelly, the author, will be one of the directors of "The Green Pastures" film. William Dieterle is being pointed for co-direction. The picture will be a Warner Brothers offering.

Theaters - 1936  
Picture, Films, etc.  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.  
EAGLE

JUN 14 1936

## The Sound Track

By Winston Burdett

### In 'Fury' M-G-M Issues a Vehement But Dramatically Muddled Protest Against the Barbarism of Lynch Law

OF THE many comments provoked by M-G-M's "Fury," the most curious is that which sees in this indictment of mob rule a deliberate melange of fact and fiction in which the producers manage to capitalize on a subject of popular interest, issue a dramatic protest and adroitly cover up their tracks so that no one can accuse them of having actually said something. Exponents of this view, for whom "Fury" is a typical albeit particularly ingenious example of Hollywood two-timing, do not deny that the film has passages of great power, but the work as a whole they find vitiated by the fact that the producers were afraid to go the whole way and pulled their punches in a shameful effort to save their face. All this, of course, is regarded as proceeding inevitably from the set-up of an industry that is governed by the profit-motive; and the movies' capitalistic bias, we are told, will always keep them from registering an honest and whole-hearted social protest. Thus the denouement of "Fury" is cited as proof that what Hollywood extends in one hand she is obliged to withdraw in another, and when, after many roundabout manipulations of plot and several sentimental speeches, the lynch mob is allowed to go free, this is taken as a deep-set plot on the producers' part, executed (in accordance with the rules of their profit-bound ideology) so that the man who chooses to remain indifferent to such things as are described in the film may go home, forget them all and say that they were all a script-writer's mistaken fancy, anyway.

This strikes me as a totally inadequate explanation of the defects of "Fury." Whatever faults the film may have, it is certainly vehement in its denunciation of lynch law. With the exception of some half-hearted hedging at the end, its entire emotional force is directed against the lynch mob, and though the hedging weakens the picture dramatically it does not erase the memory of the scenes that have preceded it; it does not lessen their impact or obscure their meaning. The fact is that "Fury" is such a good film that nothing the producers can do about it is sufficient to save their face; and if indeed they are apologizing at the end of the picture for having been so honest, their apology is a remarkably unconvincing one. For one's feeling of indignation against the lynchers is maintained in scenes whose sheer assault on the senses and visual impact cannot be withstood; whereas the denouement is supported by some pretty speeches by Sylvia Sydney and by melodramatic tricks which are as weak as they are transparent. The contradictions of the story cannot be blamed on Hollywood's lagging social conscience; they are due, rather, to the silly conventions of movie story-telling. There is every indication that "Fury" was an honest effort, but Hollywood has been so accustomed to seeing the world through the rosy glasses of boy-girl romance that not even the brutality of the present theme was enough to make her shake off old habits.

THE writers have been adroit in engineering their story to a happy ending, employing several devices which encourage the impression that they changed their mind about lynching somewhere in the second half of the picture. When the mob batters down the jail door and sets fire to the building, their victim, Joe Wilson, maneuvers a fancy escape from the flames, goes into hiding and determines that he will send all his lynchers to the gallows. The trial of the 22 hooligans is thus presented as the fantastic plot of a young man who is almost pathologically obsessed with the horror of his experience; and by portraying Wilson as a decent, self-respecting chap whose thirst for vengeance momentarily obscures his love for a pretty girl, the story-tellers hold out the chance that his conscience may in due time overtake him. Thus the fate of the lynchers hinges on Wilson and on the technical point that he is still alive and cannot therefore be legally considered a murdered man. It is this technical point that is the undoing of Miss Sidney, in whose person the writers employ a tedious stock character (the true-blue heroine who is forever talking moral sense to the hero and bringing him back to reality) as an appealing mouthpiece for mob violence. The most unfortunate scene in the film is that in which Miss Sidney visits her sweetheart and solicits his pity for the lynchers: "They're not murderers," she says. "They're part of a mob. Mobs don't think. They haven't time to think." Simultaneously she makes a play for his sympathy for her as a woman, in the following somewhat scathing terms: "Joe Wilson is dead. You know that, don't you? I can't marry you now, Joe. I can't marry a dead man."

THESE tricks and the happy ending seem to favor the impression that the producers lost heart in mid-stream and began to quibble. But there is evidence to the contrary. Not only is the lynching episode handled with unsparing realism, but there is much in the subsequent story that is equally damning as a commentary on small-town life and the operation of justice. The prosecuting attorney places the guilt for the crime on the whole community, which protects its mob and its "good name" by wholesale perjury; and the majority of the defendants are actually found guilty before the hero yields to Miss Sidney's rhetoric. When he does so, he explicitly states that he comes to court not in order to save his lynchers—who are murderers—but for the purely selfish motive that he would like some day to have Miss Sidney to be his wife.

It is apparent from the whole tenor of the film that Miss Sidney's arguments were introduced not as a sop but simply in order to make the denouement seem dramatically more plausible. Hollywood is notoriously opportunistic in its appeal to the emotions and is therefore not averse to employing such sentiments as Miss Sidney expresses when they serve immediate ends—even though they may destroy the unity of feeling and dramatic integrity of the film as a whole. That the producers had qualms about "Fury" goes without saying; but I doubt whether they had anything more serious than that. They were not trying to save their face in any political sense. What they were trying to do—very badly—was to save their face dramatically. When the writers restore Wilson from the flames, it is not a plot to conciliate the public but an elaborate ruse enabling them to give the story a surprise turn and eventually to pay angle to the lynching—make the girl.

The general terms in which the story is told—the vagueness of the locale and the absence of a race

promise. Whatever their motive may have been, the fact remains that in "Fury" they have botched what should have been a great picture. The film lacks a single punch, its ending is suspect, its points are diffuse. It may be that the producers have a timidity complex which impels them automatically to pull their punches, but if that is so they have been remarkably naive in this instance and have grossly underestimated the force of their punches. I do not, however, believe that they really thought Miss Sidney's milk and water sentiments were going to convince anybody. They are simply so used to being all things to all men that it is quite easy for them to become sentimental at the wrong moment. They meant to be honest—and they succeeded in being so for some time—but their romancing mental habits got the better of them, and what started as an ambitious social document became hopelessly entangled in some tear-jerking melodrama and ended up behind the conventional sweet-hearts.

LAFAYETTE, IND.  
JOURNAL-COURIER

JUN 29 1936

### NEGRO IN PICTURES

The high moguls of the movies are finding out that negro entertainment is a valuable product that promises rich returns to the picture producers. They have more or less stumbled on the fact that the negro, his songs, his dances and his stirring dramas behind the story of his race make very profitable movie "property." London also has made the discovery.

In fact, Clarence Muse, ranked second only to Paul Robeson as the greatest of present day colored actors, wonders whether London, which has given Hollywood much worry in competition in recent months, isn't again stealing the march on the movie colony.

Muse, composer of "Sleepy Time Down South" and other songs, pointed out that Alexander Korda, in England, has made "Saunders of the River," is making "Song of Freedom" starring Robeson, and plans to produce as a sequel "Black Majesty."

"It isn't that England has made more

tizing the black man's history. Hollywood has been inclined to view the negro in a light vein, whereas the British producers are packing the theaters with serious pictures about him. I am sure the British approach will prove the more profitable of the two. Hence it looks as though England has got the jump on Hollywood." Muse is known widely both on stage and screen. He has appeared in more than 50

negro pictures than Hollywood that gives England the advantage," Muse said. "Hollywood has made 'Show Boat' and has just completed 'Green Pastures'." "The difference lies in England's discovery of the tremendous possibilities for drama-

stage and steadily gained momentum until it found its way to the screen.

He pointed to such stage productions as "Emperor Jones," "Black Majesty" and "Toussaint L'Overture," as pioneers of the movement.

"The negro," Muse said, "has become the black gold of the picture industry. Most other themes have been used so many times, in only slightly different guise, that the public is tired of them. The negro is something new, a great undeveloped entertainment field that has hardly been scratched."

Muse used "Bill" Robinson, world's premier tap dancer, as an example of the value of a negro in the entertainment world. Robinson has appeared recently in Shirley Temple pictures and has proved a valuable teacher to her in the little star's efforts to

to dance successfully.

**By EDWARD R. LONG**

**HOLLYWOOD** — A new star will soon be flashed upon the screen. He is Troy Brown, stout, dark and comical, who appeared at the Twentieth Century-Fox studios with a friend who was answering a call to be interviewed for a picture, and "got a break."

Appearing at the gate of the film studio, Brown very nonchalantly attempted to proceed onto the lot with his friend, who had a pass. He was, of course, immediately stopped by the policeman on duty there.

**Questioned by Cop**

"And where are you going?" Brown was asked.

"I'm going inside," he said.

"Don't you know you have to have a pass to get in here?"

Brown became very serious—and yet more comical than ever.

"Man," he said, "do you see all those people going in to get a job—and you tell me I can't go in there and get a job too?"

It was too much for the policeman and those who were standing by listening to the conversation. They all laughed, and Brown proceeded to enter the studio lot—without further interference.

Arriving on the set where the dancers were called for the interview, Brown immediately became the center of attraction.

The dance director, puzzled, approached the very odd-looking Brown and said, "What can you do?"

"I can do anything the rest of them can do."

The assistant director and the dance director got into a huddle over this "new personality." After their short conference, Brown was told to show some of his steps. He did. He was again the cause of much mirth. His name and general information about him were taken, his name being encircled in red. He was told he would be called later.

By that time the news had spread all over the studio lot,

## Crashes Studio Gate, Gets Picture Contract



TROY BROWN AND JANE WITHERS

even back to the policeman at the gate, who assured him when he was on his way out that he was made—meaning he was sure to click as a film player.

### Earns \$40 a Day

The next day he was called and put under contract at \$40 a day, working in the recently-finished Jane Withers picture, "Can This Be Dixie?"

He is now a long-term contract player, ranking with Stepin Fetchit and Bill Robinson.

So, another discovery has begun to climb the ladder of fame and fortune. Troy's appearance will be with Hattie McDaniel.

## Leslie Wants Actors To Stay Their Color

*By the Dispatch*

LONDON, Nov. 25. (By Rudolph Dunbar for A.N.P.)—Lew Leslie, who last week started a new edition of his "Blackbirds of 1936," has issued orders that he wants his actors to stay the color they were when hired.

The showman declared that Negro artists he brought here from America changed several shades lighter after being in London for a few months. The girls in particular do everything possible in make-up to relieve their duskiness.

But Leslie wants them good and black. He declared the essence of his show is the color of his stars with its accompaniment of what is called "Negroid talent," and that

## GIRL PRODIGY



Gloria Caruthers, six-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Caruthers, who has been chosen by Bill Robinson under contract to 20th Century Fox Pictures, to take part in several films in which he will appear this fall. Gloria's father is a member of Jimmy Lunceford's orchestra.

is what the British public wants. When his performers start bleaching out or making up lighter, they are inclined to forsake their native style in entertainment also and model themselves on white stars, he declared.

Sharing his sentiments along these lines is Tim Moore, the dark-hued comedian who is one of the biggest features of Blackbirds. So the rule now is "stay black as you are, or else . . ."

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## "DELILAH" IN A NEW ROLE



*Courier 4-11-36*  
Miss Louise Beavers, who soared to fame as "Delilah" in "Imitation of Life," is expected to tread the paths of glory again in the new Warner Brothers production, "Bullets or Ballots," starring Edward G. Robinson and Joan Blondell. Miss Beavers will be strutting some of the latest fashions.

## MAID-IN-WAITING



*Courier 4-11-36*  
Edna Harris, the "evil gal" in the legitimate production of "The Green Pastures," appears as the maid of Lee (Joan Blondell) in the Warner Brothers motion picture, "Bullets or Ballots." "I wouldn't do for Joan to let Edna do too much smiling around her office.—Universal Studio photo.

## Get Contracts For Film Work

Still Will Write Music and  
Randol Will Co-Direct  
His Screen Shorts

HOLLYWOOD, June 11.—William Grant Still, noted composer and arranger, and George Randol, actor, who appeared in Warner Bros.' film version of "The Green Pastures," have just been given long contracts at film studios, breaking precedent for their type of work where Negroes are concerned.

RKO studios have purchased screen rights in ten shorts authored by Randol, with the added proviso that he act as co-director of the productions. They are to be made with the Hall Johnson singers supplying the vocal highlights. First of the shorts will be "Samson and Delilah," in which Edna Harris, "Green Pastures" siren, has been given the role of Delilah and Jess Lee Brooks, star of the federal project play "Black Empire," will take the part of Samson.

Still has been given a long-term contract by Columbia to write and score music. The musician, who wrote the famous "Afro-American Symphony," will work directly under Morris Stoloff, new head of the music department.

# Film Indictment of Lynching

By BEN DAVIS, Jr.

**FURY.** Produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Story by Norman Krasna. Directed by Fritz Lang. Screen Play by Bartlett Cormack and Fritz Lang. At the Capitol Theatre. *Daily Worker*

"FURY" contains elements of a powerful social document against lynching. Despite shortcomings and a typically distorted movie ending, it is one of the best things that has ever come out of Hollywood. *6-9-36*

One does not view it without immediately recalling the horrible lynchings of more than 5,000 Negroes in this country since the Civil War, and without feeling a strong urge to do something about it. This is the obvious intent of the film. By comparison, the picture emphasizes the fascist nature of the Hearst-inspired "Black Fury," "Salute," "Riffraff" and other such films, all intended to produce an effect exactly opposite to "Fury."

Briefly, it is the story of Joe (Spencer Tracy), who, because he fits the description of the guilty criminal, is framed and arrested on a charge of kidnaping a young girl. The frame-up takes place in a strange town, through which he is motoring to reach his sweetheart Katherine (Sylvia Sydney). The town is at fever pitch over the kidnaping. Word spreads that the kidnaper has been caught, and a lynch mob is formed. Unable to "get" the kidnaper, the mob burns down the jail, laughing as it sees the flames lick the cell window through which Joe sticks his arms and hands. *New York*

But somehow (in true Hollywood style), the victim manages to escape from the flaming jail. But he is determined to see the twenty-two leaders of the lynch mob pay with their lives for the attempted lynching. He hides himself and uses his two brothers and his sweetheart to carry on the prosecution. From here on the story takes a freak turn, showing the mob to have acted on some sort of "devil impulse."

SOME of the sequences are superb. The film shows the lynch mobing of the lynching evil unless it is organized and led by the "leading business men of the town," "race-superiority" poison, lynch many of whom were proven by a terror and rape frame-ups against newsreel to have actually set fire to the Negro people. This is true notwithstanding the fact that there water hose of the fire department have been a number of white vic- is it "hurried" to put out the flames of lynch terror. As a result They were upholding "law and order."

A scene in the office of the Governor showed the intimate connection between politics and lynching. Acting on the advice of his chief political friend, the Governor refused to send the national guard to "protect" the prisoner.

When the national guard did arrive, it was, of course, too late. One of the noisiest inciters of the mob was asked his identity by some of the townspeople. He replied, "Oh, I'm just passing through. I've been up to the city doing some strikebreaking for the car company. And I'm ready to go with you fellows to get the kidnaper." Another young leader of the mob was one of the town young petty criminals, who couldn't keep out of jail himself.

These shots were excellent in showing the composition and leadership of the lynch mob.

The sheriff true to fact used only tear gas to hold the mob at bay, and the tear gas seemed to have been just what the mob wanted. They broke into the jail to find the sheriff "militantly" pleading for "law and order."

THE court scene at which the 22 would-be-lynchers were tried for murder was one of the best shots in the picture. The state attorney puts up a vigorous prosecution during which he declares:

"There have been 6010 persons lynched in this country and only 673 have even been brought to trial. These cases deserve the greatest consideration." The sheriff, who grappled with the defendants in the mob, testified that he could not recognize a single one of them. That shot scored a bulls eye. One witness said that everyone in the mob was "from out of town" and she didn't know any of them. The prosecutor said, "Foreigners, eh?" She replied with a sigh of relief, "Yes."

Then the prosecutor turning to the jury said: "Gentlemen of the jury, it is the custom to put on foreigners the ills which exist in our conscience."

THE film has its weaknesses—serious ones. It is, of course, impossible to get a full understanding of the lynching evil unless it is shown against a background of "race-superiority" poison, lynch many of whom were proven by a terror and rape frame-ups against newsreel to have actually set fire to the Negro people. This is true notwithstanding the fact that there water hose of the fire department have been a number of white vic- is it "hurried" to put out the flames of lynch terror. As a result They were upholding "law and order."

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and the whole lynch atmosphere appears to be engendered by the tongues of gossip women.

The miraculously escaped victim is pictured as a fiend who wants to take the life of 22 innocent citizens "who were sorry for what they did as soon as they did it." The curious twist in the picture, makes Joe the victim of a blind lust for revenge—as if the desire to punish lynch- ers were a purely personal matter, which in itself can become a "main danger."

Naturally the court is pictured as eminently fair, interested only in the justice of the case. The judge and jury are made to find some of the would-be lynchers guilty, despite the fact that the town is overridden with a lynch hysteria. Experience and reality show quite the contrary. Was it not Judge Thayer in the Sacco and Vanzetti case, Judge Wyatt in the Herndon case, and Judge Callahan in the Scottsboro case who incited a lynch-hysteria against the accused?

BUT notwithstanding these weaknesses "Fury" will make new friends in the nation-wide movement against lynching. The fiendish glee on the faces of the mob as they howl at the burning of the victim—a scene not one whit exaggerated when applied to hundreds of lynchings of innocent Negroes—the organizing of the lynch mob by the "Chamber of Commerce" gentlemen, and the protection they receive from the Governor down to sheriff and his deputies—these are points which will open the eyes of people who are accustomed to regard lynchings as a barbarous practice entirely unconnected with the political and economic structure of the capitalist system.

However, "Fury" itself is a result of the growing sentiment against lynching, a sentiment which is organically connected with the thousands of picket lines which have marched in front of movie theatres which were showing anti-labor, anti-Negro and war-whooping films. This anti-lynching sentiment has box-office value for Hollywood. It is the positive result of action taken by people who are beginning to realize how the screen is used by the capitalist class as an instrumentality against the people and particularly the working class. And it is a mandate for workers and progressives to strengthen their boycotts, picket lines, strike actions and all other types of struggles designed to counteract the steady stream of vicious poison which flows from Hollywood.

The acting was on the whole excellent. And the story could have

been based upon almost anyone of the 6,000 lynchings that have taken place in this country since the civil war—as for example, the shooting and burning to death of William and Cora Wallis, two aged Negroes, in Gordonsville, Va., two weeks ago. All are so horribly similar. Credit is due Norman Krasna and Fritz Lang for a script obviously intended as a stirring message against capitalist lynch law and to a considerable extent revealing of its political and economic roots.

## Amalgamation Is Theme of Russian Film

### Soviet Republic's Freedom From Prejudice Is Brought Out

By Chatwood Hall  
MOSCOW, U. S. S. R. —

(By Mail)—Carrying a powerful lesson on the Soviet attitude toward inter-marriage and amalgamation of different races and nationalities, the latest product of the Soviet film industry, a film called "Circus," was given its premiere before an audience of 20,000 workers in the great Park of Culture and Rest on the banks of the Moscow river.

The leading role, that of Marion Dixon, white circus star and sweetheart of a Negro by whom she has a colored child, is played by Honored Artist of the Republic, Orlova, a ravishing blonde. The role of the colored child is played by "Jimmy" Patterson, 3-year-old son of Lloyd Patterson, American Negro worker, and his Russian wife, Vera.

The opening scene shows Marion Dixon being chased out of her house by a mob, the members of which have discovered that she has a Negro baby. She eludes the mob and escapes with her baby abroad. Although loving her baby dearly, she has had to keep its birth a secret.

Marion Dixon arrives in the Soviet Union with a German manager who knows her "secret." They are engaged by a Soviet circus. Being herself shot through with bourgeois ideology, Marion Dixon feels also that it is necessary in the Land of Socialism to keep secret the fact that she has a colored baby. She does not know that there are already in the Soviet Union millions of babies of varying colors (from black to white).

This plays into the hands of her German manager, who persists in an episode in the regular that she love him, but without show at the Moscow Music hall for avail. To make matters more complicated, the blonde American star

has fallen deeply in love with the Russian star of the Soviet circus, a strapping son of Socialism who returns her love. Being entirely ignorant of Soviet ideology and psychology in the matter of races, Marion feels that by all means she must keep her "secret" from her Soviet sweetheart.

Following repeated rebuffs, her manager finally decides to play his trump card: to announce from the ring of the circus that the popular American star has had a Negro lover by whom she has a baby. But neither he nor Marion Dixon, both children of capitalism and bourgeois society, understands nor reckons with the national attitude of Soviet people and the Free Society. Before the packed circus, the German manager, holding the colored baby, "Jimmy", aloft, announces to the Soviet audience that "Marion Dixon has been in love with a Negro and this woolly-haired, black, thick-lipped child is their baby!"

Marion Dixon, thoughts and memories of capitalist countries racing through her brain, is distraught; she feels that both her Russian star sweetheart and her Soviet public will now cast her aside. Her manager is cocksure that his trump-card has turned the trick all in his favor.

But he could not have been more wrong. The director of the circus steps in and sternly answers the German manager: "Well, what of it!" The German is bewildered, speechless; how can people be so different. The Soviet audience, itself composed of many nationalities, including Chinese, a Negro aviation officer, Uzbeks, Jews, etc., takes "Jimmy" into its arms, each man and woman pressing him to his or her breast and singing a tender lullaby.

"Any Color Will Do" "In our land one can haul any kind of baby that one wishes to—black, brown, white, yellow or green," the circus director informs the German manager in no uncertain tones. Marion's manager has now become the object of derision and scorn by both the audience and Soviet circus workers. He makes an attempt to regain "Jimmy," but two set-faced Red army men make him change his mind. He makes a pitiable, despicable sight as he pulls his cape about himself and, like a dog with its tail tucked beneath its belly, sneaks like the outcast that he is from the big tent amid the jeers, bos and sneers of the Soviet audience.

Marion Dixon and her Russian sweetheart are now united and everybody is happy, except her manager who has fled abroad from such a land where there are no race prejudices or barriers of any kind between races. "Now I understand," remarks Marion, meaning that it is now all clear to her how Socialism and the Free Society utterly destroy all race hatred and social barriers between nationality and builds a new man entirely devoid of these twin curses of bourgeois society and capitalism.

The theme of this picture has been an episode in the regular that she love him, but without show at the Moscow Music hall for avail. To make matters more complicated, the blonde American star

made available to the millions of Soviet workers of all nationalities throughout the country. Hence the entire film devoted to the topic was distributed all over the U.S.S.R. Following the premiere of the film, the thousands of Moscow workers of all nationalities and colors, arm in arm beneath the starry Russian sky, wended their way along the river embankment to their homes, striking examples in life of the idea just portrayed in celluloid.

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Picture Films, etc.

# New Contract Establishes Louise Beavers Movie Star

## First Member Of Race To Gain High Standing In Film World

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Nov. 6— Louise Beavers has arrived! Reports from the office of Sol Lesser of Principal Pictures, said the noted actress will be starred with a white cast.

Lesser has signed Miss Beavers for a long term contract, and plans to star her in at least one picture, "Aunt Jemima." All the players, except Miss Beavers will be white.

A starring contract for a member of the Race performers is something new in Hollywood. Paul Robeson didn't have one for "Sanders of the River," and Rex Ingram was not formally a star in "Green Pastures." Neither was Nina Mae McKinney, technically, a star in "Hallelujah."

Miss Beavers' contract with Lesser provides that she shall be featured, play character parts, or called on for star roles at her producer's convenience. "Aunt Jemima" is a story of a southern mammy, who is a champion candy maker, and the white folks she supports and finances—without their knowing it. The studio feels it has a sentimental "natural."

The new star played with Claudette Colbert in "Imitation of Life." In a letter to Miss Beavers, Miss Colbert praised the latter for "stealing the picture" from the writer herself.

Miss Beavers was born in Cincinnati. She is single, in her early thirties. She has never been south of the Mason-Dixon line. She went to school in California and played on a girl's baseball team in Pasadena. She recently finished a featured part in "Rainbow on the River," with Bobby Breen, eight-year-old singer and featured actor. It was Producer Lesser's opinion that Miss Beavers' enactment of the old Race woman who raises the orphaned white boy, was such deft acting that a long term contract was called for.

Miss Beavers was Leatrice Joy's maid during that New Orleans beauty's reign as a silent film star and worked with Miss Joy when the first version of "Manslaughter" was filmed.

## Home Secretary Bans Production

### Race Shown In Bad Light In 'Song Of Freedom'

### Garvey Group Victorious In Stern Campaign

(Chicago Defender Foreign News Service)

LONDON, England, Oct. 30 — A very representative gathering of white and Race artists assembled a fortnight ago, at Kingsway hall, in London on the invitation of the Universal Negro Improvement association of which Marcus Garvey is president-general, to protest against the exhibition in Great Britain of certain films tending to create prejudice against the Negro and to libel and slander his present status as part of the 20th century civilization.

#### Attack on Robeson

A vigorous attack was aimed at Paul Robeson, who has been used by producers in most of the films that came under the protest of the meeting, such as "Emperor Jones," "Sanders of the River," and his latest film written particularly for him, "The Song of Freedom."

It was the exhibition of this film that aroused the ire of the Race members of London, under the leadership of the Universal Negro Improvement Association to stage the meeting. This film was released in London ten days before the holding of this meeting and was being shown at the Plaza, one of the most popular West End theatres.

A committee of the UNIA visited this theatre and saw the film, and immediately the president-general wrote a protest to the Home secretary, Sir John Simon, drawing his attention to the libel and slander contained in the film against the

Race, and asked for its banning throughout Great Britain.

#### Film Withdrawn

The film was advertised to have a second week of successful run, but on the second night of the second week it was withdrawn under protest as filed with Sir John Simon. The meeting last night was to further protest with the hope that the film will be completely banned along with others throughout the British Isles.

Among those who were present at the protest meeting were British colonials visiting London, and several American Race visitors. Resolutions were moved and carried unanimously, with the request that copies be sent to the Home Secretary, the Lord Chamberlain, and to His Majesty, the King of England. The speakers at the meeting pointed out that Paul Robeson was a menace to the cultural attainment of the black race and that his continuous appearance in pictures, such as aroused the protest, was causing an international spread of prejudice against the black race.

#### ROBESON IN NEW PICTURE

LONDON, Oct. 30 — Paul Robeson will introduce three new songs in the new British film, "King Solomon's Mines," in which he is co-starring with Cedric Hardwicke.

#### New Negro Theatre

HOANOKE, Dec. 10 (ANP).—A special program marked the opening last Wednesday night of the new Lichtman Theatre here. The Virginian, with many of the city's notables taking part. The theatre has been completely renovated, with a new entrance foyer, modern lighting system, comfortable seats and the latest sound equipment.

# Beavers' Contract Is Guarantee To Movie Stardom

## Famed Dramatic Star Gets Long-term Contract with Provisions for Feature Roles—Signed by Sol Lesser.

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Nov. 12.—Hollywood history was made last week when Louise Beavers, capacious actress, was placed under long-term contract, with provisions guaranteeing stardom. She was signed by Sol Lesser, president of Principal Pictures.

Miss Beavers is the first race artist to receive this double accolade in motion pictures. Paul Robeson, singer, has been starred. Both Bill Robinson, tap dancer, and Stepin Fetchit, comedian, have been long-term contract players, but none of the three has had both honors.

The award came to Miss Beavers as a result of her work in the recently-completed picture, "Rainbow on the River," second starring vehicle for Bobby Breen, talented child-actor.

"Miss Beavers is a great actress," Lesser said. "There is a real need in Hollywood for players with her talent. Her work in 'Imitation of Life' first marked her as a fine, sensitive actress. Now her portrayal in 'Rainbow on the River' has placed the final stamp on her artistry."

Miss Beavers, who was born at Cincinnati, received her education in the public schools as Pasadena, Cal. Although she sang in musical comedy on the stage and served as personal maid to numerous stars, she had no thought of a screen career. Talent scouts saw her in a minstrel show at the Philharmonic Auditorium, Los Angeles, a role in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" followed, and her screen career was launched.

For a long time she was always a movie maid. Audiences saw her administering the wants of Sylvia Sidney, Jean Harlow, Lilyan Tashman, Joan Crawford, Kay Francis and finally Claudette Colbert in "Imitation of Life."

That role brought fame. Thereafter, her cinematic maid-work was finished. Directors began to expand her scenes. She played key-

roles in "Annapolis Farewell," "Wives Never Know," and in "Bullets or Ballots." She will appear next as a star in "Aunt Jemima."

# Marshall Davis Gets Truth About Paramount Film

## Not Color Prejudice, But Professional Jealousy, Led to Cutting of Sequence In Which Goodman Trio Was Featured.

CHICAGO, Nov. 25—(By Marshall Davis for ANP)—At last your columnist has what he believes is the truth about that situation concerning Teddy Wilson in the new Paramount film, "Big Broadcast of 1937." In the original

### Will Be Featured



LOUISE BEAVERS

Who will be starred in "Aunt Jemima," by Sol Lesser, white, of Principal Pictures. The best of the cast will be white. The new star signed a long term contract recently.

would have to be photographed or else the trio could not be used—which accounts for my statement on Stacey's use as a dummy.

Goodman, Stacey and Wilson vetoed the idea, and the clarinet wizard went over Franklin's head to Lew Gensler, the producer, and Leisen. Both men overruled Franklin and a uniform was ordered for Teddy. On the day set for the filming of the Trio-Raye sequence, all made their appearance in full make-up and cameras started clicking. Martha sang the first chorus to a discreet background, and then the trio cut loose

in their sensational swing style in the second. By the time they had finished, Miss Raye was looking very pained because the trio had "stolen" the number from her.

The singer immediately protested to Leisen—not because of Teddy's color, says Mr. Hammond, adding she is without race prejudice, but because that hot trio had so completely dominated proceedings. Both Leisen and Gensler, who had by then become rabid fans, tried to reason with her, but it was useless. And as there seemed no other spot in the picture for the trio, Leisen reluctantly had to eliminate them.

There you have the story, and despite the statements in "Variety" and "Down Beat," two white theatrical and rhythm publications, it differs little at base from what your columnist revealed some weeks ago. The fact remains that there was objection to Teddy's use, an official actually wanted a white musician to dummy at the piano, and Wilson did not play in the film. On the other hand, this scotches "official" statements that nothing was amiss and there was no way of "using Teddy's talents."

This writer also declared in the original story that Goodman was known to be without prejudice and pointed to his daring innovation of adding a colored musician, this same Wilson, to his band. Comments Mr. Hammond along this line:

"Benny Goodman may have his failings, included among which was his taking credit for Edgar Sampson's (Stompin' at the Savoy), but he has done more to break down the color line in music than any other man in the country.

"Not only is Teddy being featured in New York's Pennsylvania hotel, in spite of early strenuous objections from the management, he is being featured on the Camel Hour every week with full title credit—and the Camel folk are dyed-in-the-wool Southerners who had objected strongly to billing Wilson until they found out, from audience response, the extent of his popularity with the listeners. Benny has also added another magnificent Negro musician to his orchestra, the California drummer and vibraphonist, Lionel Hampton.

"Benny has also recently featured that excellent singer, Ella Fitzgerald, with him on the Camel hour after having recorded with her the previous week for Victor. It is quite possible Ella may work with Benny permanently if an understanding can be reached with Chick Webb, who has her under

contract. And Negroes do ALL of Benny's arranging and receive full credit for it, much to the anger of Broadway.

"Right now Goodman's precedent seems to be having excellent effect. The new Beatrice Lillie revue, 'The Show Must Go On,' is featuring a mixed band on the stage, including such luminaries as Cosy Cole, that superlative drummer with Stuff Smith, and a girl colored pianist, probably Irene Eadie, wife of Teddy Wilson, as well as Bunny Berrigan, Peewee Irwin, and other white stars. Several night spots in New York are contemplating black-and-white bands, including the most fashionable hotel in the city."

## \$30,000 Negro Movie Planned for Orlando

Orlando's negro population greeted with delight the announcement that a new theatre, to cost approximately \$30,000 when completed, will be erected in the 500 block on West Church Street by H. D. Everett & Associates.

Construction contract for the building has been let to W. A. McCree, local contractor and builder, it was announced by Everett yesterday, and work will begin Monday.

Architects for the theatre are Francis J. Kennard & Son, Tampa.

With a seating capacity of 700 seats, the exterior of the structure will be modernistic and will be outfitted with comfortable seats and the latest type of talking picture equipment.

The opening date is planned for Lincoln's birthday, Feb. 12, and the emancipator's name will be given the showhouse—the Lincoln Theatre.

Theaters - 1936

Picture, Films, etc.

# "Showboat" the Same Old Thing; Robeson Hopes for True Role

## Singer Says "Imitation of Life" Marked Turning Point for Players; Predicts Film Based on Booker T. Washington.

By the Cinema-Graphic-News Service

Paul Robeson, interviewed recently at the Universal Studios, where he was completing his role in "Showboat," said that his work in "Emperor Jones," his first motion picture, resulted in his being selected for the starring role in "Sanders of the River," which received much praise from dramatic critics; and his work in that production was responsible for his present part in "Showboat."

He played the same part, that of Joe, in the revivals of the play made in the last year, beginning in New York and London. Mr. Robeson feels, however, that he has yet to play the part he has longed for, a part representing the modern colored man as he is today. He believes and predicts that this desire will some day materialize.

### Four Roles Turned Down

Since his role in "Sanders of the River," he has turned down four different offers for other pictures, because he felt that they could add nothing to his present status, and also would not be of any material benefit as far as his race was concerned.

### Signs for London Film

Just a few days ago, Mr. Robeson signed, via cable, to do an independent picture in London, very shortly, titled "Chaka," which has been written specially for him.

It is the story of a young African, born in supposed barbaric surroundings in the wilds of Africa, on a secluded island, which is possessed of evil spirits; and any individual coming within twenty feet of the island will be possessed by these spirits. The mother of this young African is the queen of the island.

The son makes his way to America in quest of an education; having received his education, his only desire is to go back to his native land and spend his life teaching the people of his race the modern civilization, and in that he is successful.

### Plans New Musical

After doing "Chaka," Mr.

Robeson is going to make a musical extravaganza in America. It is going to be done independently by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein, 2nd, who wrote the music for "Showboat."

He thinks that the motion picture screen is the greatest medium through which individual and collective traits and abilities can be flashed all over the world. He said that the Afro-American group is now, and will be in the future, greatly benefited through the medium of the screen.

### "Imitation" Turning Point

There have been great strides in the revivals of the play made in the last year, beginning in New York and London. Mr. Robeson feels, however, that he has yet to play the part he has longed for, a part representing the modern colored man as he is today. He believes and predicts that this desire will some day materialize.

He further stated that the screen, with an all-colored cast, will further prove that the colored actor is an artist — as much an artist as any other actor, both dramatically and musically.

He feels that in the very near future there will be a very modern version of his race's history screened; he himself would like to play in a picture fashioned after the life of Booker T. Washington — "Up from Slavery" for instance.

### Stage Fright Remains

It is very interesting to note that Paul Robeson, considered among the world's greatest baritones, was unsuccessful when he tried to make his college glee club.

"I was, and still am, scared to death when I start to sing," Robeson said. "Even now, before a concert or a performance, I get terribly restless and nervous. This lasts until I have sung two or three numbers and then I relax."

In regard to racial relations, he said:

"I want to go back to Russia. I visited there just before my last concert tour in England, and it is the one place in the world today where one can live as a human being, without prejudice entering into the scene at all."

### Others Dead in Comparison

"In Russia you feel the vitality of a people who are building a new world; in comparison, other countries are dead."

At the Royal Albert Hall in England, on January 19, at 3:30 p.m., many artists representing different nationalities will gather for festival purposes; and naturally, as he is looked upon most favorably by the British as an excellent representative of his race, Mr. Robeson will be present and sing concert numbers.

Also in the cast of "Showboat" are Hattie McDaniels, Irene Dunn, the star, and Helen Morgan.

## Robeson, McKinney

## Film Wins Award

LONDON (ANP) — "Sanders of the River" the British-made film starring Paul Robeson and Nina Mae McKinney which is reported as receiving only indifferent success in its American showings, has just been awarded the annual gold medal presented by the Institute of Amateur Cinematographers for the most significant talking picture of 1936.

The film was produced by Alexander Korda's London Films company. The institute's gold medal is comparable to that of Hollywood's Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and is the most coveted trophy of English producers. It was awarded last year to Alfred Hitchcock, British director, for his melodrama, "The Man Who Knew Too Much."

## ROBESON WINS ANN ENGLISH PRIZE

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## Negro Theatre History Listed

### School Will Offer Course on Background of Drama—Plans Scholarships

Realizing the influence of the Negro theatre on the contemporary theatre of today, the school board of the New Theatre School, 55 West Forty-fifth street, has included in its curriculum for the forthcoming semester, which starts in March, a broad, informative course on the history of the Negro theatre.

The instructor for the course will be announced at a future date.

The board also announced that it will give several scholarships to those interested in the Negro theatre. To further extend the scholarship to a worthy student, the board announces that any organization or group giving a scholarship, the school will donate another scholarship to one other person designated by that group.

Among the prominent people of the theatre who are in the national advisory council of the New Theatre are Langston Hughes, Rose McClen-don, Leigh Whipper and Augustus Smith.

## Studio Official Denies Negroes Are Exploited

### Being Paid Standard Weekly Rates, Says Edward Selzer

LOS ANGELES, Calif., (ANP)

—A denial that players in "The Green Pastures," now being filmed at Warner Brothers, are exploited by being paid sub-standard salaries was issued last week by Edward Selzer, an executive of the studio.

He said they are paid on the same scale as white actors and added that 450 Negro men and women were used in the Al Jolson picture, "The Singing Kid," and these were paid at the standard rate of \$50 weekly in addition to overtime which is what white singers draw.

Incidentally, the photographer who will have charge of all the scenes is Hal Hohn, whose work on "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Captain Blood" and "Anthony Ad-verse" added to the success of these recent releases. In order to bring out every part of the picture to its fullest extent, 120 different scenic settings are being used.

Marc Connelly, author of the stage production, is working diligently on the filming. It was pointed out that he has an ideal in mind—that of an illiterate Negro's conception of a divine being deeply concerned with the problems his own creation has brought him, and he is personally seeing to it that this mood and feeling is carried out.

It would be easy enough to develop the film into a humorous and satirical production which would weaken the drama, turn Green Pastures into a farce and therefore a sacrilege since the play actually symbolizes the simple and childlike beliefs of many untutored Negroes.

# Hollywood Caters to Wishes of the South but Broadway Thumps Its Nose; Dictates.

By RALPH MATTHEWS

NEW YORK, N.Y.—Both

the movies and the radio are still the slaves of Dixie and its asinine racial prejudices, bowing to the crack of the Southland's whip like Uncle Tom before the lash of Simon Legree, but the Broadway stage tells the Civil War die-hards where to head in.

Radio keeps a strict censorship to see that nothing that would be offensive to white supremacy gets a hearing on the ether waves. Brilliant speakers, who dare to touch on racial tolerance, rap, bigotry or condemn mob lawlessness cannot get on the air, but Broadway, with such plays as "Tobacco Road," "Mulatto," and "Stevedore," tells the colonels from below the Mason-Dixon line where to go.

## Plays Continue

"Tobacco Road" continues to run after two years on Broadway, despite condemnation of Southern papers and blacklisting by the Catholic Church, which also branded "Mulatto" as unfit to be seen. The Catholics took this stand in spite of the fact that both of these plays are honest portrayals of conditions existing in the South today.

One deals with the abject misery of the poor white trash, the other shows the intolerable conditions under which colored children born of mixed parentage, forced on them by the lust of white men for colored women, are forced to live.

## Movies Are Hottled

But with the movies, things are different. The cinema must always take into consideration what Dixie thinks about a production.

The Marc Connelley film version of "The Green Pastures" will be slashed and hashed to conform to Dixie tastes. The first move was to oust from the original cast all players of fair complexion or else black them up for the movies, because Dixie does not like to see colored actors too light.

## Make Them Uncle Toms

Whenever plays are sent into the Southland, most of the scenes in which colored performers come into too close contact with whites and show any degree of intelligence or equality, are altered or deleted.

Bill Robinson, who has just completed a cycle dealing with

ante-bellum Dixie, with Shirley Temple, is always presented as an old Uncle Tom. This was the case in "The Littlest Rebel," and "The Little Colonel."

Daniel Haynes, a fine dramatic artist with a Broadway reputation, was presented as a bootlicking Uncle Tom, in "So Red the Rose," who preferred to stick to his master rather than accept his freedom.

## Poor Role for Robeson

Paul Robeson, a singer and actor of international fame, was given the role of Joe, in "Showboat," as the best Hollywood had to offer.

When his film, "The Emperor Jones," was presented in the South, all sequences showing him giving orders to the slinking white trader Smithers were deleted.

## "Hold Your Man" Returned

It has just been disclosed that the film, "Hold Your Man," starring Clark Gable and Jean Harlow, with Theresa Harris as one of its featured players was rushed back to the studios for retakes. Southern exhibitors objected to the climax in which the two lovers stole off and were married by an old colored minister. For the South the story had to be retold so that a white man would perform the ceremony.

The job involved can be appreciated when the reader recalls that the drama was built up around the friendship of a colored and white girl in a reformatory, and the colored friend, played by Miss Harris, was instrumental in helping her friend solve her love problem by sneaking her off to a colored minister. Miss Harris has had few roles of importance since that picture.

## "Imitation of Life" Peeved

The picture, "Imitation of Life" went very much against the grain of the Southland because, in spite of the careful way in which the authors kept Louise Beavers in a subservient state to Claudette Colbert, the mere fact that the picture recognized the moral obligation of the white woman to share her pancake profits with her cook made it taboo, and the thought that Fredi Washington, the mulatto, discontented daughter, rebelled against discrimination, also peeved the Bible belt. There will probably be no more "imitations of life."

So Hollywood goes on, kissing the slimy boots of the Southland, while Broadway sticks its thumb to its nose and marches duly on.

DUBUQUE, IA.

# TELEGRAPH HERALD

JUN 17 1936

## Negro Talkies

Perhaps half a dozen years ago a moving picture called "Hallelujah" was produced with an all colored cast. Released without any great fanfare of publicity the picture was acclaimed by many intelligent critics. Certainly the negro spirituals it featured were unforgettable and many persons who enjoyed it have looked in vain for more pictures of the same type.

Now that "Green Pastures," adapted from the stage hit, is making a talkie success announcement comes from Hollywood of a program of six other testament two-reel shorts to be made by all colored casts with the Hall Johnson Negro choir under contract to sing spirituals and southern folk songs. The sixty Hall Johnson singers are also to be used instead of instrumental music, for the "under scoring" musical background for the films.

It is more than likely that these films will be acclaimed by a movie going public fed up on jazz interludes and music going round and round.

One service of the radio has been the popularizing of good music. There are growing indications that the United States is coming of age in regard to music and the other arts and beginning to take them as a natural part of well-rounded living rather than something apart and highbrow.

Since the Metropolitan Opera opens its doors to young American singers this summer and lowers its prices so that everyone may attend Hollywood may be encouraged to try more musical experiments.

The Vienna Boys' choir made a great hit in the movies and it seems reasonable to suppose that other well-trained choir and chorus groups, both native and foreign, might be received with favor by the public.

Certainly a larger number of intelligent adults will become regular picture patrons as the movies get away from the "Boy Meets Girl" type of thing which appeals primarily to the adolescent mind.

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

## EAGLE

JUN 14 1936

## A Timely Comment on Lynching.

Hollywood, that fantastic land of compromise, has finally given voice to a protest that is of vital importance to the nation. True enough, the protest is as usual adulterated with sentiment, with specious thinking and occasionally dishonest emphasis, but there is enough of it left to give the population of this country something to think about. That film is "Fury," and it deals with one of the least pleasant of American outdoor sports, lynching.

It is "Fury's" aim to demonstrate how lynch mobs originate, who motivates them and how a man innocent in every respect of the crime charged against him can be taken to his death by burning alive. This it demonstrates with conviction, with power and with relentless realism under the guidance of Fritz Lang, the

great director of "M." Its early scenes, up to the actual storming of the jail where Joe Wilson is entombed on suspicion of kidnaping, are almost unbearable in their comment on our towns, small and large, that have permitted such outrages against American principles of democracy and justice, on the small-town gossips, the "pillars of society" and the upholders of "law and order" who, ruled by passion, prejudice and alcohol in equal parts, can and have in the last fifty years taken over 6,000 men to death by fire, shooting, stabbing, hanging.

What is more, the film reveals, though it does not give proper emphasis to, the political aspects of lynching, and it is conspicuously silent on one important aspect of this form of terrorism—how lynch mobs are used to split and terrify the ranks of workers, black and white, who clamor for more than a subsistence wage. Angelo Herndon can testify to this, as well as the spirit of Joseph Shoemaker, dead of flogging in Florida.

But what it says should remain in the minds and hearts of its audiences, and, while it is possible to deplore the fact that the industry has again fallen short of a complete statement (and thereby, quite possibly, of a masterly film), it is necessary to say that this picture should be seen and talked about by every American who cherishes the true dispensation of justice and the retention of our constitutional guarantees.

Theaters - 1937  
Picture Films, etc.

# African Princess Will Star In Film With Paul Robeson

Beauty From the Sudan Will Play Opposite the  
World-Famous Star In London In The  
Motion Picture Spectacle "Jericho"

Twenty-two Year Old Beauty  
From Sudan Is Co-Star

LONDON, — (By Rudolph Dunbar for ANP) — After three days' beauty treatment in Paris, Princess Kouka, an amazingly lovely brown woman from the Sudan, in Africa, arrived in London last week. She is to play opposite Paul Robeson in "Jericho," a new motion picture.

"She is as vivid as the relentless sunshine and as serene as the ocean of sand," rhapsodized Walter Futter, the English producer who found her in a Sudanese village during the expedition there to get local color.

In coming to London, Princess Kouka, 22, has left her native Africa for the first time in her life. She was amazed that in Paris it took three girls a whole day to do her hair, pluck her eyebrows, and paint her nails — and when she saw herself afterwards she was afraid to go out.

## Has Career

The princess, who is the daughter of a sheik, appeared at one of London's finest West End hotels wearing a gold lace veil, royal blue jacket embroidered with silver wire, scarlet silk skirt, six pinch earrings of beaten gold, a gold filigree bridle and bracelets inset with coral and turquoise.

Speaking French, Kouka said her father was horrified when Futter suggested that she do anything so "disgusting" as become an actress. But she cried at first, shut herself up in her room, and her father finally said she might as well appear in pictures as die of starvation.

During a visit to Egypt, she saw three films. The one she liked best was "King Kong" and she went back night after night to see it again. She was very anxious to know whether Paul Robeson looked anything like King Kong, and was disappointed when she learned

ed he was not quite so large.

The beautiful princess is a Mohammedan, and she does not drink or smoke. She is not engaged, and thinks she might like to marry an Englishman — if he would live elsewhere, for she thinks this country entirely too cold after a life spent in tropical climes. She has also promised to learn the language in one month. Kouka has beauty, charm, serenity and a grand sense of humor. She has a habit of shrugging her shoulders in the French manner and displaying her perfect teeth when she smiles.

Incidentally, the princess has never heard of Marlene Dietrich or the great English film director, Alexander Korda.

## RANDOL-COOPER ALL-NEGRO FILM TO SHOW JAN. 19

By HARRY LEVETTE for ANP

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Jan. 14 — At last the dream of Negro film fans all over the country seems about to be realized. This dream is that some day Hollywood would make all-cast, or nearly all-cast, pictures of modern Negro life that would not have to depend on spirituals or the low-end and produced at the new Grand comedy side of the plantation Ne-International Studio by Geo. Randolph. Their impatience has been allayed and Ralph Cooper, will be unappeased by the fact that Hol-flashed on the screen of the Lin-livewood makes pictures for whitecoln Theatre. In true Hollywood audiences, little thought being style brilliant floodlights will turn given to date as to the film fare night into day in the heart of craved by that great minority, the colored district on Central the Negro population.

But now comes the first real world premiere of an all-Negro cast film made and released by Negro producers, when on Janu-

wood theatres.

Besides the members of the cast and the famous colored featured players who have made history in the mixed-cast films many noted stars of the white race have already made reservations or will make personal appearances on the stage. Among these are: George Raft, Victor McLagen, Evelyn Venable, Sheila Terry, Jas. Cagney, Hal Moir, now a producer, but responsible for the photographic beauty of "Green Pastures," and many others. According to advance information seat prices have also been elevated to the standard of the usual Hollywood premieres. Following this preview and world premiere, the film is to be shown on the road through release channels that will place it in theatres patronized by the millions of fans included in the Negro population of the United States.

The story aside from the fact that it is modern and up-to-date, both as to setting and the dress of its characters, has a strong plot built upon actual life and scenes in New York. It is a cross-cut of life in Harlem, that great dark city within a city from the cultured and sophisticated down to the gangster and racketeer side so well known to be prevalent there, and other large Negro communities. The action is swift and moves rapidly to a surprising climax so critics declare, it will furnish real entertainment to both colored and white fans the world over.

Included in the cast are: Ralph Cooper as "Curley" Cleo Herndon as "Flo Gray," his beautiful sweetheart; Clarence Brooks as "Larry Lee," Sam McDaniel as "Jack Jackson," Jesse Brooks as police lieutenant, and Neil Clisby as sergeant.

## The Negro In Motion Pictures

WE HAVE SEEN Louise Beavers in her latest picture, "Rainbow on the River," which had its New York premier at the Radio City Music Hall. Miss Beavers shares stellar honors with Bobby Breen, a young singer who plays the part of the adopted son of the Negro actress. Again Miss Beavers proved that she is the No. 1 actress of the Negro race on the screen but we are still dissatisfied with the kind of story given her.

Charles Laughton, George Arliss, Helen Hayes and several of the other white stars of Hollywood have gone in recently for motion picture biographies, and these pictures

and fighting spirit they showed.

The life of the late Dr. Booker T. Washington, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Bert Williams or for a film of colonial days the life story of Crispus Attucks, are all fitting subjects.

Paul Robeson objects to being "typed" given colored actresses. The biographical film has the advantage over the present-day parts given Negro performers in that it offers a wide variety of scenes and types for the performer, who may start off as a servant type and work up to something quite different thus giving his histrionic talents wider opportunity for expression and at the same time offering a true-to-life story to the

An excellent film story might be made from the life of Battling Siki, the Senegalese soldier who won the world's light heavyweight championship by defeating Georges Carpentier in France and then went to Ireland to fight as the shiftless laborers that most Negro Hismales have to play, while Frederica Washington finds it difficult to get work because she does not like the "servant type" usually given colored actresses.

Other prize fight characters that might prove interesting subjects for a motion picture would be the original George Dixon (Little Chocolate), Joe Gans or Jack Johnson. We select characters from the squared circle because of their humanness, the obstacles they had to overcome and the courage

have been highly successful both from an artistic and financial standpoint. Henry VIII, Mike McGigue on St. Patrick's Day. The House of Rothschild, Louis Pasteur-life and assassination in New York would make as good a climax as any present-day gangster a few of the outstanding pictures of this group film. While entertaining, they were not all complimentary to the subjects treated but they did serve to set forth those qualities which caused the names to go down in history. We would like to offer as a suggestion circle some Negro or white motion picture group cles they had to overcome and the courage

public.

The biographical film of Negro characters might be suitable for both white and colored audiences, as such names as Toussaint L'Ouverture, Alexander Dumas, Christophe, Pushkin and even Booker T. Washington have a meaning to whites as well as colored audiences and the human appeal of their lives would be just as interesting as the appeal of say Rembrandt. Moreover, young people would become interested in the history of the Negro race through the medium of the motion picture much more quickly than through wading through long and mostly times uninteresting biographies.

**Mass Race Protest Changes Plans Of 'Gone With Wind'**

*5-22-39*

HOLLYWOOD, May 20—Concerted Action? It worked on Hollywood. In response to widespread protest from Negroes over the country, all Ku Klux Klan sequences are being cut from the production "Gone With the Wind," soon to be filmed. According to Jimmy Fidler, in his Hollywood Gossip broadcast Tuesday night this is because those scenes encourage race hatred and reflect the discredit of Negroes.

# LONDON'S NEWSPAPER REPRESENTATIVES ARE CALLED 'DROLL' BY NEW DISCOVERY THERE

## She Talks In French With Arabian Sudanese Beauty Pronunciation When Interviewed At Claridges Hotel

garments seem quite natural. She has natural charm and intelligence.

LONDON, Jan. 15—Princess Kouka, 22-year-old Sudanese beauty, met newspapermen for the first time last week in London and found them "tres droll." Princess Kouka of El Fasher, in the Sudan, a sheik's daughter, was chosen by Walter Futter, the film director, to be Paul Robeson's leading lady in his new film—"Jehicho."

In her sumptuous quarters at Claridges hotel, she sat talking French with the gultural Arab pro-nunciation a circle of news-paper men and women.

She was dressed in a pleated skirt of scarlet silk that swept from a high waist to the floor. She had her Eastern shoes.

A sash of crimson slashed with white was round her hips. Between the red of her dress and the bright silver-striped blue of her bolero jacket, flowed the thick white satin of her petticoat.

**Beaten Gold Ear Hoops**

Bound about her black, centre-parted hair was a veil of gold lace threaded with blue silk cord. Her neck was circled with a collar of red and yellow gold. From her ears swung beaten gold hoops three inches in diameter. She wore a gold filigree girdle and bracelets inset with coral and turquoise.

But she was not dwarfed by her clothes. This 22-year-old child of the African desert, with no schooling save from a governess, and no knowledge of European civilization save for a short visit to Cairo, made the



**PRINCESS KOUKA**

Left her native Africa for the first time to act opposite Paul Robeson in the film of "Jehicho." She is now in London learning enough English to speak the lines in the desert picture. The Princess speaks only French.

# Motion Picture Taken by British Officer at Wal Wal Finally Gets Government Approval.

By Our London Correspondent

LONDON, England, July 15, (By Mail).—A film taken by a British officer of the Wal Wal incident, which Italy used as a excuse for the invasion of Abyssinia, was shown in public for the first time on Saturday last at a Garden Party held at the grounds of King Alfred School, Bolder's Green, London, in aid of the Ethiopian Fund of Mercy for suffering Ethiopia and her refugees.

**Why Film Was Suppressed**

The British Government, had hitherto refused to allow the film to be shown in its entirety—presumably for fear of offending Italy and of exciting British public opinion. In the film, the Anglo-Ethiopian Boundary Commission (which was delineating the frontier of Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland) is seen arriving to find an Italian armed force camped 60 miles within Ethiopian territory.

The Italians refused to allow the Ethiopians to use Wal Wal wells and a parley between a British and an Italian officer which followed this is also shown. It will be recalled that the Italians refused to allow the Commission to proceed further, whereupon the Commission retired, leaving its escort of Abyssinian troops encamped opposite the Italians.

More important, the film shows an Italian airplane and a picture of the bomb it dropped in the Commission's camp when fighting broke out between the Abyssinians and the Italians. Another picture shows British Somali troops with a Lewis gun mounted and trained on the Italian airplane.

**Courage Found Again**

When during the Italo-Abyssinian war, an American film company offered a large sum of money for the film, the Foreign Office would sanction its exhibition only on condition that the bomb and Lewis gun episodes were cut out. Apparently the Government was frightened of what Mussolini might say if he knew that the British had dared to train a gun on one of his airplanes.

But now that Abyssinia has been well and properly betrayed and things Ethiopian are decently forgotten the Government has become so bold that it does not care who sees the film.

Theaters-1937  
Picture Films, etc.

## Louise Beavers Strongly Defends "Aunt Jemima" Roles Given Her

First Negro Woman to Receive a  
Star's Contract in Hollywood  
Has Never Been South

By ROI OTTLEY

There has been considerable criticism in certain quarters of Louise Beavers, the first Negro woman to receive a star's contract in Hollywood, playing what is termed "Aunt Jemima" roles—a counterpart of Uncle Tom parts.

Productions like "Rainbow on the River," in which Miss Beavers interprets the role of a mammy of the old South, has aroused many Negroes because of the line she delivered, "Negroes were happier in slavery."

### Criticizes Negro Press

Miss Beavers, in turn, has been equally critical of the Negro press. She said in her defense:

"I have no objection to playing the so-called 'Aunt Jemima' roles, because they are period plays. I am an actress and interpret characters as they are written."

The motion picture star revealed that she has been constantly greeted by friends throughout the country with the equivalent of "I could have just spanked you for not taking that money that Claudette Colbert offered you in the picture, 'Imitation of Life!'"

### Not Delilah in Life

She pointed out, as she prepared for her next show at the Apollo Theatre, "People don't seem to understand I am not personally Delilah, the role I played in the Fannie Hurst story. It was the Delilah of the play who refused the money."

The star added, whimsically, "Let somebody walk up to me now and ask me if I wanted \$20,000—I'd take it and ask what for."

"There are plenty of scripts," Miss Beavers continued, "which I personally do not agree with, but can I be personally responsible for what a Hollywood writer puts into his story?"

### Born in Ohio

"I was born in Cincinnati and went to California at the age of eleven. I have been there ever since and, therefore, know nothing about



Louise Beavers, as she appeared backstage at the Apollo Theatre.

the South except what I hear."

The young actress added: "While I might interpret the roles of ignorant people at times, I have heard it said that it takes intelligence to do such a part."

"I am particularly anxious to get this across to my people—I am only playing the parts. I don't live them," added Miss Beavers.

The successful thespian was warm in her praise of Warner Brothers, who, she said, gave her every consideration—as much as any other star was receiving.

### Roles Confused

Miss Beavers, striking a reflective pose, pointed out that sometimes Uncle Tom roles are confused with the question of gratitude and loyalty. Delilah in "Imitation of Life," the actress points out, was merely being loyal when she refused the money and said she would rather stay in the household as a servant. The Claudette Colbert character had befriended her and her child and she therefore felt a gratitude to this woman.

expect everyone to like her roles, she feels that she doesn't think that she does twenty-three changes, not including many wigs. Much of the criticism of Hollywood performers would subside, is the belief of Miss Beavers, if the public knew something of their problems and how hard they work.

"When I was making 'Rainbow on the River' with Bobby Breen," says Miss Beavers, "I had to be at the studios at 6 a.m. and then prepare for shooting at 7 a.m. Make-up must be put on and a hundred-and-one things are done before actually appearing before the cameras."

### Picks Outstanding Role

Returning to her pet discussion, that of Uncle Tom roles assigned to Negroes in pictures, she asked her visitor particularly to

point out that "all races are burlesqued in pictures." She feels that possibly the Negro is a little oversensitive.

The star, who has never been South, although most of her roles have been portraying Southern women, will again have a similar part in "Gone With the Wind."

## Harlem 'Black Magic' Film Arouses Storm

By ST. CLAIR BOURNE.

Patrons of Radio City Music Hall who leave the spacious movie cathedral to look for "Black Magic" in Harlem, which has been shown to them in the current film issue of March of Time, are in for a disappointment.

The outlandishly and stupidly distorted scenes which the producers of the new feature series have released as a picture of Harlem constitute one of the grossest as well as latest libels perpetrated upon this uptown community.

Vigorous protests have been filed against the film by a number of organizations and individuals who have labelled it as viciously misleading, insulting and a deliberate attempt to present Negroes in an unfavorable light, and have demanded its instant withdrawal from all theatres.

A visit by this writer to the theatre last week revealed that the film is all that it is said to be. Under the caption of "Black Magic in Harlem," it purports to offer a true idea of the habits and customs of the Negro residents in the section.

Opening with a verbal prologue which tends to characterize the people of Harlem as a group of primitive, ignorant savages, devoid of any knowledge of the civilization surrounding them, the film immediately sets the stage for the ensuing mockery with a series of Harlem shots, with special emphasis on the small churches situated in private buildings and small stores.

Then follow some scenes alleged to be "inside shots" of some of the "churches," showing groups indulging in wild, weird and somewhat fantastic orgies of contortion, with beating tom-toms, chants, rolling eyes and grotesque gestures.

The remarks of the commentator accompanying these scenes paint a very colorful and equally false picture of Harlem as a place where such scenes are everyday occurrences, and at one time he declares openly that one-third of the population of Harlem are voodoo worshippers.

Show Voodoo Rites.

Inserted in the middle of the film is a short sequence showing voodoo rites in Haiti, inferring indirectly, but no less clearly, a distinct connection with Harlem practices.

The whole film is staged with an exotic, weird setting, which would tend to present Harlem to the uninitiated as a veritable jungle, whose in-

habitants never get any nearer to acting like ordinary human beings than wearing clothes.

The film comprised one-third of the complete issue, the other two dealing with the child labor amendment and the coronation in England, and is advertised as the edition which won a recent award.

Among the protests registered are those from the Federal Council of Churches, the N. A. A. C. P. and the Associated Film Audiences, an organization interested in improving the presentation of social questions by the movies.

Dr. George E. Haynes, executive secretary of the Department of Race Relations of the Federal Council of Churches, following telephone conversations with the publicity of the March of Time organization, wrote a strong letter in which he refuted the assertion that the film was "important news."

The Department of Race Relations has communicated with interracial committees and local church federations all over the country, asking them to visit the film and lodge similar protests.

King Solomon's Mines (Gaumont-British) is good-old-fashioned adventure

adapted from H. Rider Haggard's 50-year-old melodrama. In quest of legendary diamonds encased in Africa's jagged Drakensberg Mountains go doughty Allan

Quatermain (Sir Cedric Hardwicke),

Kathy O'Brien (Anna Lee), Captain Good

(Roland Young), Sir Henry Curtis (John

Loder) and Umbopa (Paul Robeson), a

burly, black Zulu. On the desert trek the

reckless five almost perish from thirst.

In the mountains they are tolerated by

Kukuana savages only because the super-

stitious blacks believe benedicted Cap-

tain Good to be a white god. Before they

attain the mines he is required to demon-

strate white magic in the form of an

opportunity-scheduled eclipse. Umbopa

proclaims himself the rightful, monkey-

furred Kukuana chief.

King Solomon's Mines is as rich in

scenery as it is in make-believe. The prin-

cipals are trapped in a sandstorm, in a

burning thatched village, in a gurgling underground crater which erupts upon their entrance. Majestically pictured is Paul Robeson, scaling peak and precipice, chanting *Mighty Mountain—I'm Going to Climb You*. For some spirited shield-whacking and spear-hurling filmed in South Africa, Director Robert Stevenson hired 5,000 native Impingi, who were reluctant to act because they thought they were being drafted for a new European war. Good shot: Robeson digging for water in the sand which the parched party gulps in a frenzy.



ROBESON & HARDWICKE

Theaters - 1937

Picture Films -

# Cameras Start Showing First Scenes Of "Harlem Aristocrat" This Week

"Believe it or not, but it's true!"

came these appropriate lyrics from the throaty contralto voice of Harriet Harris, comely principal in the large group now putting the finishing touches to an elaborate rehearsal sketch, preparatory to appearing in the all-talking, full-length feature, "Harlem Aristocrat," featuring an

all-Negro cast and sponsored by Action Pictures Company and The New York Age.

"You'll have to repeat those last lines of the song when we go from the medium shot to the close-up, Miss Harris," Director Irwin R. Franklyn called to the good-looking girl at the piano, "and wise the sound track won't match up in the cutting."

Believe it or not, but it's true! Not only is Harriet Harris repeating over and over again these lyrics from Alfred Ethelred Blakeley's song hit, to be featured in the picture, but one hundred and forty-four other men, women, and children, cast for important roles, and some three hundred extras and bit players are constantly saying to themselves, "Believe it or not, but it's true—I'm really going to appear in a professional talking motion picture that will be projected upon the leading theatre screens throughout the world! The New York Age and Action Pictures Company have given me an opportunity to make the screen my life's work, if I make good in this production!"

## Ambitions Being Realized

In abject wonder, hardly able to believe their own vision and hearing, these ambitious people of both sexes, all ages, and from all parts of New York State and New Jersey, are on the threshold of realizing ambitions and dreams of a lifetime, with the possibility of later winning game and fortune as permanent members of an all-Negro picture company.

A few weeks ago, Sallie Harmon, just eighteen was a Hunter College Junior with vague visions of a professional future devoted to, chemistry. Now she is the leading lady of "Harlem Aristocrat." In six weeks her name will flash in electric lights over the fronts of five Harlem theatres, and soon after that, from the marquees of theatres throughout the

South, the West, New England, the West Indies, Cuba, South America, Mexico, France, and Northern Africa!

If Sallie and her colleagues, from the lowliest extra to the important leading players, fulfill the expectations of Mr. Franklyn and the publishers of The New York Age, a future of rosy prospects, fame, money, and contentment awaits her and others.

## Learning New Language

These several hundred ambitious people are already learning a new language through long, tiring hours of rehearsing. "Cut, playback, roll 'em over, sound track, this is the picture, close-up, dollies, stand by for a re-take, a boom shot"; these and other queer sounding phrases out of the depth of Hollywood are becoming a regular part of Harlem's idiom since "Harlem Aristocrat" went into rehearsal.

By the time this edition of The New York Age reaches the newsstands the first scenes in the picture will have been shot and completed. Then follows four more weeks in front of the cameras and under glaring Mazda bulbs, after which the thousands of feet of disintegrated negative will be shipped to the film laboratory for developing and printing. With a master print on hand, Director Franklyn and his assistant, W. R. Dillworth, will then commence the task of assembling the picture into intelligent continuity. Sometime between March 15th and March 30th there will be a world premiere at five leading Harlem theatres simultaneously, then will come distribution throughout the rest of the universe, with the leading members of the cast making personal appearances.

## To Produce Monthly

Early in May, shooting on the second production, "Ebony Man", the life story of Battling Siki, will commence with a cast chosen from among the most successful players in "Harlem Aristocrat." After that Action Pictures will produce one complete feature a month.

Not only have actors, actresses, singers, dancers, and musicians been given a chance by the producers and

The New York Age, but those interested in photography, writing, direction, make-up, sound, costume, and scenic designing will be trained for jobs free of charge by the studio and this newspaper. This is the final week for applicants to send in the coupon published in this issue of The New York Age, entitling them to this opportunity. Next week all those who have applied for training will be personally interviewed at the studio, preparatory to the commencement of their classes.

In three months Action Pictures will have trained for regular work in the studio a score of Negro cameramen, still photographers, sound engineers, costume and scenic designers, and make-up technicians. Thus the way will be paved for more people to seek and possibly win success in the movies.

Commencing with this issue of The New York Age the complete novelization of the story of "Harlem Aristocrat" will appear in regular weekly installments. Don't miss a single thrilling chapter and watch out for the showing of the picture. To be sure you get your copy of the paper regularly it is advisable to place your order with your newsdealer now.

In addition to the weekly installments of the story, The New York Age will run in each issue interesting and entertaining accounts of the studio experiences of those engaged in making "Harlem Aristocrat." Don't miss these highly enlightening stories—read every issue!

## Another Major Bowes' Star



MRS. ANNIE MAE HUNNICUT

A former gospel singer, broke in to the news when she appeared on Major Bowes' amateur program in New York. Out of this appear-

ance grew a movie offer and the deep-toned singer from Atlanta, Ga., is now on her way to Hollywood. —ANS Photo.

## IN NEW SCREEN PLAY



**TROY BROWN**

Three-hundred-pound fleshite who has been claimed the biggest flesh star to yet hit Hollywood. This elephantine actor is playing a featured role in "Nothing Sacred," co-starring Fredric March and Carole Lombard. Brown wired The Chicago Defender amusement department that he is 11 hundred per cent for the return of flesh.

## IN CANTOR'S NEW FILM



**THE PETERS SISTERS**

Pictured above are the famous Peters Sisters, who have been currently appearing with Olsen and Johnson's big revue which has been touring throughout the states. Following their closing date with Olsen and Johnson's show they received a contract to appear with Eddie Cantor in his new picture "Ali Baba goes to town." The famous sister team sent their approval of the big flesh fight and say they are two hundred percent for flesh.

## All-Colored Films Offer Outlet To Professional Talent Of Race, Says Star Of New Gangster Pic

By FAY M. JACKSON

HOLLYWOOD, (ANP)—"I like working with the Negro film producing company, now managed by Ralph Cooper, because in the picture I have the chance of wearing clothes," said Theresa Harris this week. She means a beautiful wardrobe that is usually denied colored women in white movies.

Miss Harris is currently starred in "Bargains and Bullets," a gangster film essayed by the Million Dollar Productions company which grew out of the combination of George Randol and Ralph Cooper, prior to their motion picture production of "Black Manhattan."

Not many years ago the actress was considered "tops" among the senia film players. She played three

successive hits with Barbara Stanwyck and Joan Blondell in one year. She has lost none of her talent but the breaks in Hollywood films seem to have deserted her. She has turned to the All-Negro company as an outlet.

"A person of any standing professionally takes a long chance with his reputation in joining pioneer companies," the actress stated. "Naturally facilities are limited. We can not secure the very best directors. Good players are few. But the opportunity of playing in roles otherwise denied one in white pictures is a great relief to the aspiring Negro motion picture artist."

Asked if she thought the com-

pany had a future, the girl said: "It has as much of a future as any other film company, if adverse publicity and an impatient public do not kill it. I believe Mr. Cooper is sincere in his efforts. He is certainly hard-working."

"We have nothing to lose in the development of an All-Negro motion picture company. If it succeeds, the competition will make Hollywood perk up and produce better films with Negroes in more of a variety of roles. And, in the meantime, many more top-notch actors now unemployed will be cast in roles commensurate with their real abilities as actors. If it fails, we shall know what improvements to make with the next venture," Miss Harris concluded.

er, the great master of his first dramatic role "Bargain' With Bullets," which colored picture such as "Bargain' With Bullets" produced to stand has its Brooklyn origin four days to the reputation Loew's Theatre December 30, 1910. Theaters have built in the picture presented at Loew's Bedford Avenue Theatre, Bedford Avenue near Fulton street.

# More Negroes Now Employed In Hollywood

## Major Studios Seek Service Of Actors From Ben Carter

HOLLYWOOD. — (ANP) — While Central Casting Bureau serves major picture studios with many of their calls for extra film players to be used in large productions demanding crowds for atmosphere scenes, such as "Marco Polo," "Hurricane," "They Won't Die," and the like, Hollywood finds a unique and convenient service in the Chudnow Artist Agency, as Ben Carter supplies Negro bit and feature players of a higher class to most of the larger studios producing in Hollywood.

Interviewed this week in his newly decorated branch office in West Temple where talent scouts bring in new recruits whose acts must be whipped into shape by Carter and his Associates, or rehearsals of contract players are held before study directors see them, Carter declared the current week a record breaker for the employment of colored acts, feature actors and actresses, and bit players in the movies.

On his beautiful mahogany and ivory desk, set imposingly in one corner of the studio-office, rested orders calling for more than 200 actors, singers, and dancers. They came from Fox and Hal Roach studios; Warner Brothers, Major, Monogram, and Sol Lesser Production companies.

A healthy sign for the success of the agency is the fact that all players are required to join the Screen Actors Guild before signing up for picture work. This not only helps the actor, Carter pointed out, but it keeps the standard of motion picture performances up to the public demand for the best in its screen fare.

### Takes Over Crinoline Choir

"I am happy to say," Carter began, "that there is no jim-crow in motion picture work. Our players must meet the same requirements that other players meet. If anyone thinks to the contrary, he simply does not get into the film colony. Our pay is set by the guild and we do not have to haggle over costs and wages, making bad feeling on one hand, taking the artist's mind off his work on the other. I, myself, am a member of the guild and am very proud of it," he said. "We conform strictly to all guild and union regulations set forth for motion picture players."

Among the new players contracted by the Carter agents are members of the Crinoline choir numbering 30 male and female voices managed and directed by Carlisle Scott. Fine singing by this choir won an assignment for them by

Carter with George Stoll at major studios and for Dave Dryer, head of the music department at RKO, Mr. Carter announced.

### Sing Short

Carter styles himself as an actor-agent, often fills studio calls himself. He has just completed a song tract for Columbia's community sing short.

Nicodemus, well known comedian, was signed for a feature role in "Jezebel," Warner Brothers' latest film vehicle for Bette Davis which entered production this week.

Stymie Beard and Meredith White are back at Warners for retakes on "Too Much of Everything," starring Beulah Granville and Delores Costello.

Three of the screen's cleverest and most popular kiddies, Pauline, James Cullen, and Alvin Morris, signed for specialty acts in Fox "Love and Hisses" with an all-star cast including Simon Simone, Walter Winchell, Peters Sisters, Chilton and Thomas, and others, Carter said.

## LOUISE BEAVERS IN NEW FILM



"I'm tired of bread and milk," complains little "Henry," the younger of the two sons of "Sally Weston," played by Louise Beavers in Urban Dollar Productions' new film, "Life Goes On." But Bob, the elder brother, reprimands him for complaining and adding more to the worries of their widowed mother.

# NEW REGAL THEATRE OPENS THIS FRIDAY

Oral Stubblefield, Builder,  
Received Much Praise  
For Achievement.

## Studio Ends Filming Of Short Story

Clinton Rosemond  
Plays Role of  
Famed Scientist

By HARRY LEVETTE

HOLLYWOOD, (ANP) — "The Life of George Carver" which tures of the building is the unusual fea-ly large poured concrete balcony, horizon of the world that many reinforced with steel and support-Negroes even yet have not heard ed by a huge steel beam weighing of its filming at MGM studio, was six tons. The roof is also poured finished last week. concrete reinforced with up- beams which experts say is one of the most difficult jobs in modern building.

Arthur L. Hardin, white of Arthur L. Hardin Associates, real estate dealers who financed the building, said that this building shows what Negro workmen can do and I feel that it will open still more opportunities in the building trades for them. I congratulate the Colored Race and especially Ora Stubblefield."

Herman Illmer who has leased the theatre says that in addition to giving Colored St. Louisians the finest theatre, we will always give them the best pictures and other entertainment." The program for tonight and other days following until Friday of next week will be found elsewhere in this issue of the Argus.

C. A. Davies, contracting engineer and Bruce F. Barnes, architect, both white, said that they could heartily recommend Mr. Stubblefield and the other help he employed on the New Regal for any future structures on which they might be employed.

Many of St. Louis' prominent citizens will attend the opening tonight.

The reason for its quick completion is that it is just a "short subject" intended for the second billing at first-run houses throughout the country. But while it is not a feature length film, the fact that it was made at all is an epic in only the history of the Negro Race but an event in the annals of the progress of America.

While Hollywood has been spending millions on the "Life of Emile Zola," "The Life of Pasteur" and other famous foreigners, it has been neglecting equally interesting chronicles of the lives of its own noted citizens of the past and present.

It is a great credit to MGM that it elected to honor Carver, a Negro when other interests blind themselves to worthwhile achievement because the skin of the achiever is black.

Carver's marvelous experiments that raised the lowly "Goober" or peanut from the most almost despised of Southern farm products to first ranks of edible market products in demand the world over will be enlarged upon in the picture as well as his accomplishments with the sweet potato and many other agricultural productions.

The fact that he will be afforded the privilege of seeing this monument to him while he is still alive will be unusual. Offers made to him and declined although they came from Edison and famous colleges, will also be revealed.

Clinton Rosamond was chosen without hesitancy to portray the

role of America's great scientist and according to director Fred Zinneman, he did as fine a piece of work as he did as the humble janitor in "They Won't Forget" who narrowly escaped being the innocent victim of a lynch mob. Robert Lee and Fred Rinaldo prepared the script.

Theaters-1937

Picture Films, etc.

# White And Colored See Motion Pictures Side By Side In Alabama Town; Only A Brick Wall Separates Them

THEY DO IT THIS WAY IN ALABAMA

The Macon, Built By Negro Contractor, Has Separate Entrances and Separate Ticket Booths On Same Street, Also Separate Staff.

By EDGAR T. ROUZEAU

TUSKEGEE, Ala., Sept. 2—In this up and coming town, less than a mile from Tuskegee Institute, they are celebrating the second birthday of what is probably the most unique theatre in the country.

It is the Macon theatre, a duplex built house with a conspicuous spot on Tuskegee's public square. If you can imagine an architect putting up the walls of two theatres side by side, and placing one roof over both, and an interesting management, then you have an idea of the Macon.

Each theatre has its own entrance, its own ticket booth facing the same street. One entrance for white patrons, one for colored. The interiors of the two theatres are as alike as two boxes. Same decorative scheme, same lighting effects, same number of seats. The colored side even has its own cashier or ticket girl, its own doorman, usher and relief employees. The white girl in the white ticket booth has a vase of flowers at her elbow. The colored girl has one too. There are even the same number of roses in each vase.

Motion pictures are run from the same projection booth. Separate projection machines are used, but the same films. The trick is done by running pictures half an hour earlier in the colored unit of the theatre. White operators do the work for both sides.

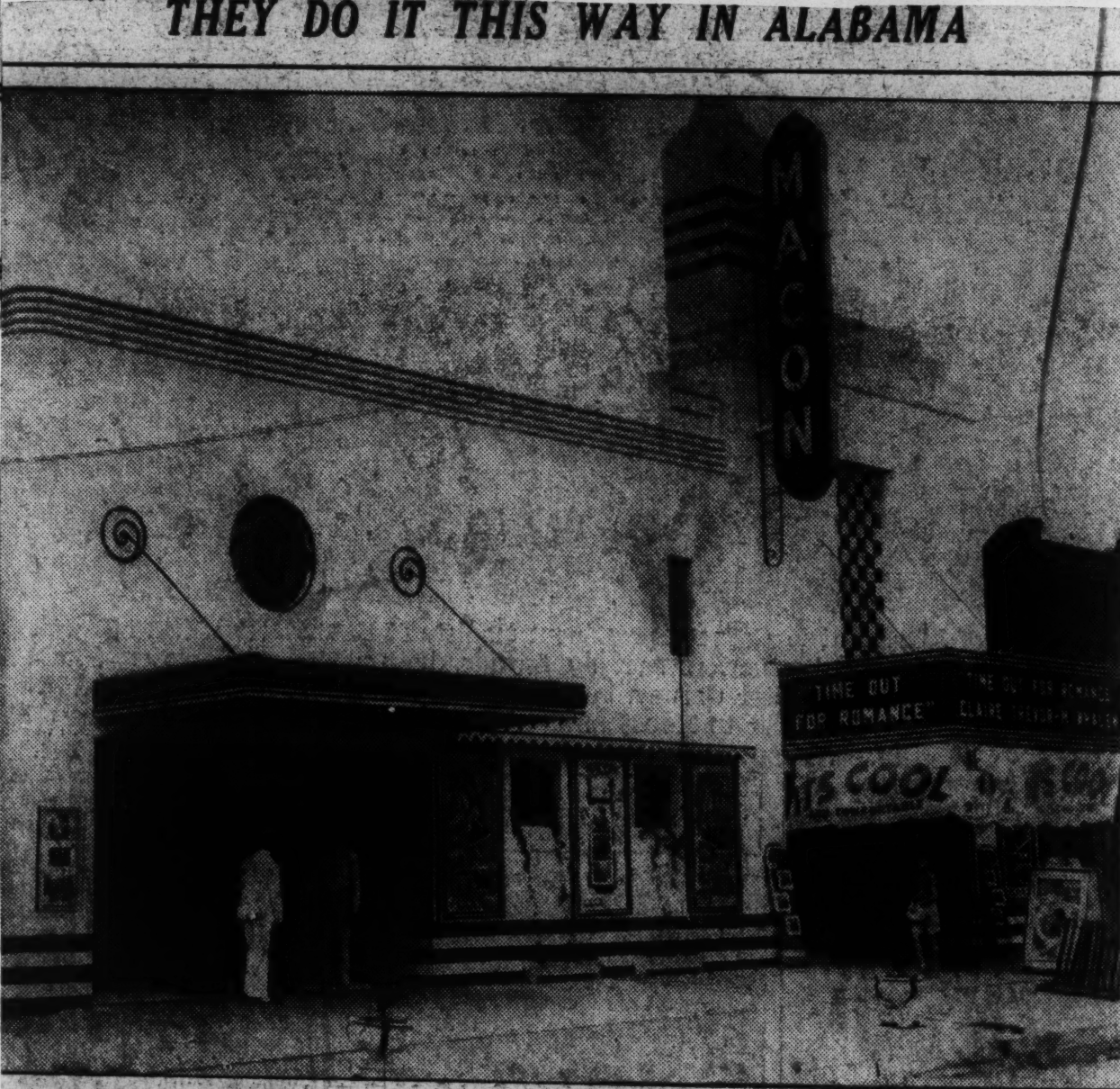
The Macon theatre was constructed by a Negro contractor, the late T. C. Windham. It is operated by Alabama Theatres, Inc., which owns theatres in Birmingham, Montgomery and other cities. The Macon was launched as an experiment, but it has been so successful that now the management is thinking seriously of a similar project in one of the big cities of Alabama.

The colored unit has a seating capacity. It draws heavily on the student body and faculty of Tuskegee Institute and also on the ex-

ecutive and personnel list of the Government Veterans Hospital No. 91, which is laid out a mile or so on the other side of the Institute.

According to A. O. Dahnwood, white manager, the white half draws a considerable part of its patronage from the surrounding towns. Although the house has first run pictures, he has found that the whites of Tuskegee prefer to drive to Montgomery for their motion pictures. They can drive the 40 miles in an hour or a little more, and have their motion pictures and something to tune them up. The county in which the town of Tuskegee and the school are located is bone dry, but it is entirely surrounded by wet counties.

The staff of the colored side includes Rowena Hunt, cashier; Rufus Moore, usher; Marcus McMillen, doorman; Tecumseh Rutledge, relief cashier, and Frank Harris and Frank Sistrunk, relief men.



The Macon Theaters at Tuskegee—with separate entrances for whites and Negroes, but each entrance, et cetera, exactly alike, even to the decorations. Pictures are shown from same projection booth, the reels being run on the Negro side first.

# New Micheaux Picture to Be Made in Harlem

NEW YORK—Oscar Micheaux, veteran colored producer, has announced an early October date for the release of his latest all-colored picture, "God's Stepchildren," starring Carman Newsome and beautiful Ethel Moses.

Adapted from the story, "Nami, Negress," it tells the story of a very light-skinned colored girl who doesn't want to be colored. Bred by her foster mother to attend a colored school, which she resents, a hate engenders her heart which plays an important part in her life from then on.

After spreading a lie about her teacher and the principal, which develops into a whirlwind of scandal, she is placed in a convent for 12 years. After making her exit from the convent, she falls in love with her foster brother, who spurns her love. Persuaded to marry a black man, she gives birth to a boy and then.



MISS ETHEL MOSES

leaving him, goes "over to the other side."

The story winds its way to a gripping climax.

## Hollywood Refuses To Change Popular Characterizations of Negroes and Other Minorities. Education Group Told

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. (AP) — Hope that film moguls might be moved to change their minds on the currently popular characterizations of Negroes and others received a setback last week, when their spokesmen told leaders of Jewish, Protestant and Catholic groups that producers would not allow the role of educators to be thrust upon them.

Any groups desirous of films to propagate "ulterior" ideas of religion, politics or economics are free to get a camera and go to work," spokesmen told the conference, adding that Hollywood would "stick to straight entertainment, subject to the rule of common decency."

Marion Quigley, publisher of the Motion Picture Herald and other magazines, was responsible for these statements. He received strong opposition from Fred Eastman, professor of literature and drama at the Chicago Theological Seminary, who said:

"Whether the producer knows it or not, he is an educator. He shapes emotions, intelligence, sets up character patterns and everything that determines outlooks on life."

After much discussion by speakers from both sides, Dr. Alice V. Keliher, director of the Motion Picture Commission of the Progressive Education Association, attempted to smooth matters out by saying that although producers stuck to entertainment as their function, it had already been found possible to use selections from motion pictures as "dramatic case studies" in human behavior for study by pupils.

As an illustration she showed a selection featuring the lynching scene in "Fury," and summoned a dozen upper high school and junior college students to informal discussion of their reactions to lynching as dramatized.

There was some dismay among the religious and educational enthusiasts present, however, when most of the young men said the "educational selection" made lynching seem more "interesting and exciting," and when most of the young men admitted they would have "gone to see the fun," one girl added "and been ashamed of it afterward."

That left the problem of effective use of films in an undecided state.

### THEATER OWNERS RAP RACIAL TREND IN CAST

Practice Feared As Leading To Census Board

SAY 'BOORERS BOOED' OUT

Tri-State Association Unworried By Protests Against Advertising — R. X. Williams Re-elected

Indiscriminate mixing of races in motion pictures was described as a growing trend and decried by Mid-South film showmen assembled at the Chisca yesterday for the thirty-first semi-annual convention of Motion Picture Theater Owners of Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee.

"We have had a lot of complaints and unless our people can be warned in advance against shows where negroes step out of character among white people, I'm afraid we are going to have a State Censor Board in Mississippi," declared W. H. Baker of Macon, a vice president of the tri-state organization.

#### Attitude Indorsed

Mr. Baker complained specifically against two recent pictures, "One Mile From Heaven" and "Artists and Models." His remarks drew commendation from several other speakers and a promise from Ed Kuykendall, president of Motion Picture Theater Owners of Arkansas, that the matter would be called to attention of the movie producers in Hollywood at a conference soon. Also discussed at yesterday's meeting was the wave of organizations opposed to commercial advertising on the screen. J. F. Normar of England, Ark., reported that this booring business has about booded itself out.

R. X. Williams of Oxford and Y. O. Moore of McKenzie, Tenn., were re-elected president and secretary. Mr. Baker was re-elected vice president for Mississippi. Mr. Normar was chosen vice president for Ar-

kansas. W. F. Ruffin was re-elected Tennessee vice president.

#### Lightman Re-elected

With M. A. Lightman re-elected as chairman of the Board of Directors, the following board members were elected: For Arkansas, Henry Sanders, Little Rock; Cecil Cupp, Arkadelphia; M. S. McCord, North Little Rock; Sidney Wharton, Warren; L. F. Haven, Forrest City; W. L. Landers, Batesville, and Ray Morrow, Malvern. For Mississippi, W. S. Tyson, Water Valley; W. A. Rush, Houston, and H. J. Williams, Grenada. For Tennessee, E. L. Drake, Jackson; Col. Cecil E. Vogel and Tom Ballas, both of Memphis.

Speakers yesterday included O. C. Lam of Rome, Ga., and L. C. Griffith of Oklahoma City, both members of the national board; Mr. Kuykendall and Mr. Lightman. The annual banquet-dance was held last night at the Chisca.

Mr. Norman announced that the Independent Theater Owners of Arkansas will hold their annual convention at the Marion Hotel in Little Rock Nov. 7-8.

Theaters-1938

Picture Films, etc.

## Artists With Benny Goodman



Lionel Hampton, at the vibraphone, and Benny Goodman, at the piano. The two colored members of Benny Goodman's swing band will be seen in "Hollywood Hotel" at the Regal for four days beginning Sunday.

# As Hollywood Sees the Negro

## Camera Out of Focus When Director 'Shoots' Negro Life

We publish below the first of two articles on Hollywood and the Negro people. The author, a brilliant young Negro journalist and a contributing editor of the New Masses, has made a special study of his people in various fields of culture in the United States, and the Daily Worker, consistent with its policy of reflecting the cultural life of this country, thanks "The Crisis," organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, for permission to reprint Mr. Miller's illuminating article on the films.

By Loren Miller

Little was written about it at the time but Los Angeles had a movie premiere early in 1937 that was more significant in its way than many of the highly publicized and extravagant Hollywood premieres of the year. The premiere was that of "Dark Manhattan," a rather crude gangster film built around a trite and shopworn plot and weighted down with faults.

The significance of the film lies in the fact that it was produced expressly for theaters with a Negro clientele and that it served to start a cycle that promises to result in a regular flow of talkies featuring Negro casts and at least purporting to deal with Negro life. Since that time, four similar films, one of them starring Joe Louis and written about his life, have been produced and at least two companies are in the field with announcements that they will go into regular production.

"Dark Manhattan" was produced by George Randol and Ralph Cooper in cooperation with a white producer. Randol came to Hollywood to make "The Green Pastures," a picture to produce some shorts for R.K.O. The R.K.O. make a talkie which will have a shorts were very reminiscent of "The Green Pastures" and although twelve of them were promised only three were made. Randol then started his own concern with Cooper but they have split and



Cooper is now one of the heads of another concern called Million Dollar Productions.

Million Dollar Productions' first offering was "Bargain With Bullets," another gangster, but much better from a technical standpoint than "Dark Manhattan." The film was well received, got a nice hand from Variety, the bible of the show business, and the company plunged

into another film, "Life Goes On," which has just been completed.

Meanwhile Joe Louis came to Hollywood and another group, advised by Clarence Muse, secured him for a picture titled "Spirit of Youth." That picture has now been released. While these pictures were being conceived and filmed, Spencer Williams, another actor, interested other capital in the idea and as a result "Harlem on the Prairie" will soon be offered theatres. Randol is still active and has announced an ambitious list of titles, none of which is in process of production.

The Joe Louis film, its makers say, is not designed for an exclusive appeal to houses with Negro patronage. Their professed ideal is to make a talkie which will have a theater-goers as "good entertainment." They are frank in saying that the production is experimental and that the future of the concern is bound up with the reception of the Louis film; they may modify their plans or they may abandon production altogether. Other producers are just as frankly out to build up a clientele of theaters with Negro patronage and they cite statistics to prove that there are enough Negro theatre goers to support such ventures.

This infant industry has offered little thus far to Negro cameramen, scenario writers and other employees necessary to produce films. Like other so-called independent producers, the makers of these films rent their equipment from the larger studios. All of them have been paying at least the minimum wage scales set by the Screen Actors Guild. The stories have required little creative ability because they are mere adaptations of well known themes; producers have played double and triple roles as writers, actors and directors.

This idea of producing films for the Negro theater audience is new; Oscar Micheaux tried it years ago with the silents and it hasn't been going to be satisfied, and been experimented with intermittently ever since, both by him and others. The new crop of concerns is the first to secure backing with at least enough money to exploit the idea on a fairly wide commercial scale. Some of these companies are going to fail but there are indications that others are going to

succeed to some degree.

## Artistically Mediocre

The two films thus far produced have been distinctly mediocre from an artistic standpoint. The plots are trite, the stories have been told a dozen times and the films have had their measure of success because the actors are Negroes. The actors have been competent without being brilliant, perhaps hampered by the limitations of the material. Certainly a stranger, unacquainted with American life, could have seen them without gaining any real insight into the complexities of Negro life in America. The films are, in truth, just old-fashioned, pot boiler melodramas.

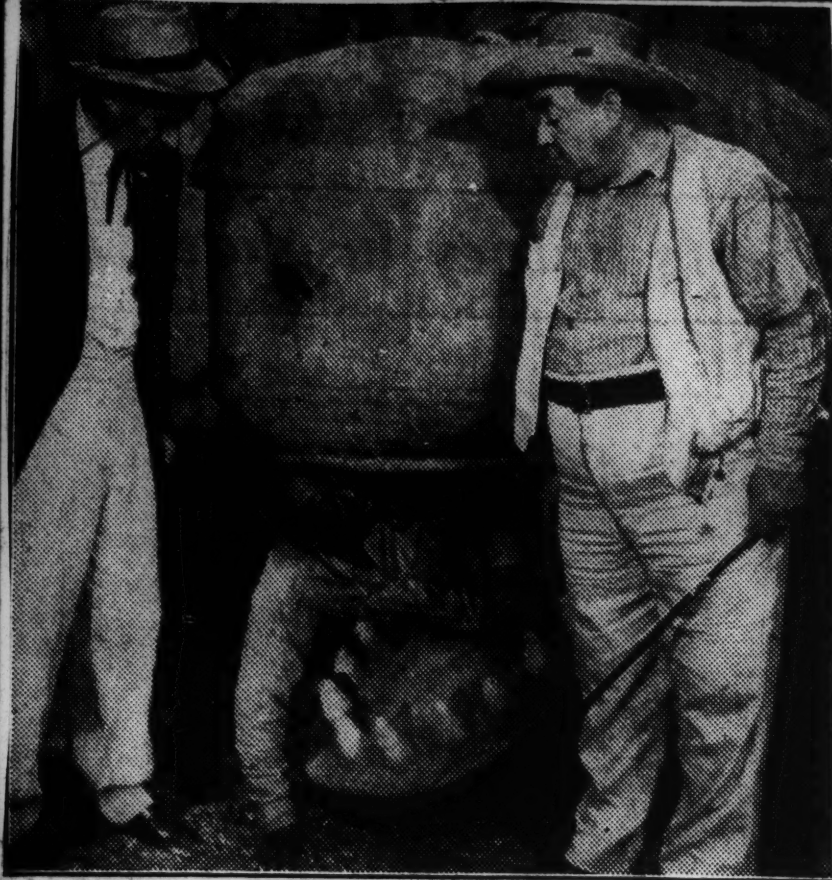
"The Spirit of Youth" includes several lavish cafe and cabaret scenes, a tip-off that the night club aspect of Negro life, so beloved in screen and stage tradition, will be stressed. "Life Goes On," the Million Dollar Production, stars Louise Beavers and re-tells the story of the mother and two sons, one good and the other bad. The good boy becomes a lawyer, the bad boy a gangster. You can guess the rest: the lawyer-son saves the gangster-boy from prison and the erstwhile racketeer marries the little-girl-from-the-old-home-town.

"Harlem on the Prairie" is a western with transplanted Harlem Negroes on the hunt for buried treasure. It is labeled comedy and is not quite complete; I don't want to hazard a guess as to its merit in its field but it can't be realistic. The same concern is at work on another comedy, "Jungle Justice," written by F. E. Miller, of "Shuffle Along," fame, and advertised as "novelty comedy drama."

Films of the kind already produced, and in production, offer little to cheer about; those who have been crying out for films that will depict Negro life realistically will not be satisfied, and every one of these film makers has recommended his products on the ground that Uncle Tom plays no part in them. Consciously, or unconsciously, these producers are

making their films in response to a hackneyed gangster, success, or love story. The Lafayette Players of a generation ago tried that same formula when they produced dramas of the Dracula type with Negro actors. The acting was good and the actors were competent, even excellent, but the problem is solved by merely casting the Negro actor as the hero

(To Be Concluded Tomorrow.)



Stepin Fetchit, above, is invariably cast in a role of an illiterate, shiftless and irresponsible Negro; Louise Beavers, below, left, who despite her recognized talents, has never been given a better role than that of a servant to wealthy whites.

# Rex Ingram in Tuberculosis Movie; Takes Leading Part In Film To Combat Disease

"Let My People Live" Tells Sordid Story of Terrible Ravages of White Plague

Preview To Be Presented In 60 Days

TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE.—(ANP)—The story behind the filming of the moving picture here last week with Rex Ingram as the leading character is another example of the current tendency among certain organizations and institutions to utilize Negroes to interpret their "sales message" to Negroes.

In this regard the National Tuberculosis Association is taking a forward step in its efforts to combat the ravages of tuberculosis among Negroes.

Two years ago, the Association engaged Arna Bontemps to prepare a special leaflet for distribution among Negroes. In this leaflet dangers of the dread disease were narrated with dramatic fervor and in a style at once understandable by the humblest Negro family. Suitable illustrations gave

campus, chapel, choir, and nearby rural churches and homes a natural setting, the new film, which is entitled, "Let My People Live", tells an impressive story without the sordidness and depression which usually attends such a delicate and involved subject.

Without being preachy or burdened with unwieldy medical terms, this story dramatizes the importance of having tubercular suspicions diagnosed and arresting the disease in its early stages.

Saunders E. Walker, director of the Tuskegee Institute Little Theatre assisted in staging the play and selected and trained the following Tuskegee students for parts in the cast: Robert Anderson, Jackson Burnside and Miss Christine Johnson.

In commenting upon the picture, Dr. Guild said that many health organizations in the South are giving a great deal of cooperation to those Negro agencies which help to disseminate information on the subject. "Many of those State Associations here in the South," continued Dr. Guild, "are adding trained Negroes to their own staffs of workers."

According to Dr. Guild, over 100,000 Negro boys and girls in schools and colleges are writing essays on tuberculosis each year and "many of their papers reveal a wide knowledge of the subject. "With such a force enlisted in the cause of better health," he said, "our movie story 'Let My People Live' will greatly stimulate their efforts as well as assist the many programs of health education among Negroes."

The National Tuberculosis Association expects to show a preview of the picture within the next sixty days.

**T. B. MOVIE IS MADE AT TUSKEGEE**

TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, May 19 (ANP)—The story behind the filming of the moving picture here last week with Rev. Ingram as the leading character is another example of the current tendency among certain organizations and institutions to utilize Negroes to interpret their "sales message" to Negroes.

In this regard the National Tuberculosis Association is taking a forward step in their efforts to combat the ravages of tuberculosis among Negroes.

Two years ago, the Association engaged Arna Bontemps to prepare a special leaflet for distribution among Negroes. In this leaflet dangers of the dread disease were narrated with dramatic fervor and in a style at once understandable by the humblest Negro family. Suitable illustrations gave further life and vigor to the message.

Encouraged by the response from this pamphlet, Dr. E. St. Claire Guild and Dr. H. E. Kleinschmidt of the Association's office consulted President F. D. Patterson, C. A. Barnett and other Negro leaders about utilizing the motion picture with Negro characters as a next step in reaching still larger numbers of Negroes with a warning of the dangers of tuberculosis.

With the Tuskegee Institute campus, chapel, choir, and nearby rural churches and homes as a natural setting, the new film which is entitled, "Let My People Live," tells an impressive story without the sordidness and depression which usually attends such a delicate and involved subject.

Without being preachy or burdened with unwieldy medical terms, this story dramatizes the importance of having tubercular suspicions diagnosed and arresting the disease in its early stages. Those assisting Mr. Ingram in the professional cast included Miss Ernestine Coles and Peggy Howard and Wilbert Smith. Edgar Ulmer directed the production.

**Negro Health Film Premiere Held At Mercy**

**Tuberculosis Film Cast Includes Rex Ingram And Tuskegee Choir**

The Philadelphia premiere of the new Negro tuberculosis film, "Let My People Live", was held in Phillips Auditorium of Mercy Hospital, 50th street and Woodland avenue, Tuesday afternoon.

The picture, with an all-colored cast featuring Rex Ingram and the Tuskegee Institute Choir, is an instructive health film showing how the "white plague" may be diagnosed and cured in its early stages.

The movie was produced by the National Tuberculosis Association in cooperation with the Julius Rosenwald

Theaters - 1938  
Picture Films, etc.

## NEGRO FILM EXTRAS IN NEW PLAY WELL PAID

### Too Hot to Handle Is Vehicle

By HARRY LEVETTE for ANP

HOLLYWOOD, Sept. 1—The "big bad wolf" can huff and puff in vain at the doors of many local colored film actors and extras this coming winter, for the payroll at Metro-Goldwyn studio for their new film "Too Hot to Handle" during the past few weeks has been a godsend to them.

During the past nine days nearly \$3,000 per day has been paid out to the colored players alone, most all of whom are members of the Screen Actors guild. Those who did not belong to this powerful and very beneficial union were allowed to work by the studio after securing waivers so they could fill out the numbers required. These received the same rates of pay as guild members, which was attended to by Charles Drubin, capable young militant checker of the guild.

The sum total was the largest amount of cash paid colored movie actors since "Slave Ship" at Fox studio over a year ago when in addition to the stock players, and day players who had worked all through it, 700 were used in a single day. This was the well-remembered scene of the sweltering hell-hole of a crowded ship hold packed with human cargo.

Including a number whose checks with adjustments for overtime and stunt pay averaged \$100 per day during this period, 255 men worked for three days straight. Of these many doubled back after a few hours sleep at home to start a new day of 8 hours at studio specifications.

The first group that worked was 75 men who had refused to start work at less than \$11 per day after agreeing to go through the specified action at \$8.25 per day. For that day rather than hold up the picture while settling the controversy, the production department submitted to their demands but held them to their agreement for the following days.

The 75 worked all week until Saturday when the number was increased to 180, including 30 women and girls and 25 children. Of these 175 continued through Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. On Friday night following the dismissal of the women and children to prepare for the strenuous scenes of a South American native fire dance enough men were added to bring the number up to 255. These worked Friday, Saturday, and Sunday with 30 of the special dancers being called back last Monday.

All these calls were made through Central Casting bureau, colored agent, Chas. Butler, frequently with very short notice. However, the players were all pronounced satisfactory, both as to types and ability. When necessary to work all night, generous hot meals were served right near the set, but in the daytime free transportation was furnished to the lot cafeteria, although it is in easy walking distance. Although the strictly "atmosphere" people are paid \$8 per day, tomorrow beaters were paid musician's local wages at the average of \$16 per day, some 90 dancers drew \$11 per day, and 9 stunt men who leaped into hot coals received \$35 per day.

### 250 Organize Film Colony

LONDON, Sept. 7. — Brought here by Zoltan Korda, director-brother of Alexander Korda, for realism in "Sons of the River," over 250 Negroes have established a film colony.

They were recruited at distant empire ports. More than 500 were originally brought here. The 250 to remain have received motion picture work in "Elephant Boy" and "The Drum" with many currently working in "The Four Feathers."

## Hollywood Has Never Offered Screen Role To Marian Anderson

Ruby Barbee, Supporting Courier's Drive for Negro  
Support of Negro Pictures, Drives Home  
Telling Points.

By EARL J. MORRIS  
Motion Picture Editor

HOLLYWOOD, Sept. 8—The solution to the motion picture problem from the Negro's standpoint, is simply for Negroes to support colored film plays," says pretty brown-skinned Ruby Barbee, current attraction at the "Latin Quarter" club here. Miss Barbee, like Marian Anderson who has a lyric soprano, has played in unassumingly the entire world in her mercurial productions on the major field, has never received a lot of lots and was a leading lady in the major companies. They can't Spencer Williams' comedies, but say that the South doesn't want seldom has heard his voice been heard in the South raved over her in the movies.

"If the colored motion picture audience," continued Miss Barbee, "would follow your suggestion to spend only a third of the \$50,000 of that type, but they could if the \$100 a year with the colored film Negro movie public spent \$15,000, companies we would soon see high-salaried colored artists in picture studios."

The Million Dollar Productions, Hollywood Productions and Premier Productions would soon become the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 20th Century-Fox and Warner Brothers in the colored field.

"These concerns, if the Negroes supported them, would soon be in a position to produce epics which would necessitate the employment of thousands of extras. They would be shooting three or four pictures on each lot at the same time. The major studios when they employ 300 extra extras, caused a panic in the colored film colony, in the scramble to be cast. But if 15,000, 000 of that \$50,000,000 was spent with the Negro concerns, they, instead of employing 300 "G-string" extras, would use 500 to 1,000.

"There hasn't been a concert singer or opera star that was white that has any degree of magnitude, that hasn't been seen and heard in the movies. Yet a woman

The scenes selected are intended to show the type of work which is being done in the South by the 450 Negro County and Home Demonstration Agents and the picture was planned with the cooperation of T. M. Campbell of Tuskegee and John B. Pierce of Hampton, Negro Extension Supervisors for the Southern states.

### "The Negro Farmer!" A Great Picture!

Chicago, Ills.

"THE NEGRO FARMER" a moving picture, showing the progress of Negroes in the rural South, was shown last week at the Regal Theatre in Chicago and attracted a great deal of attention.

This picture, which is one of a Series made under the direction of the United States Department of Agriculture, shows the effective type of work done by Negro Extension workers of whom there are 450. These workers are selected from graduates of Hampton, Tuskegee and Land Grant Colleges. The men are skilled in soil conservation, terracing, crop rotation, care of cattle and work stock, while the women specialized in canning, sewing, handicrafts, rug-making, home and yard beautification etc.

The picture was planned by T. M. Campbell of Tuskegee and John B. Pierce of Hampton, Extension supervisors in fifteen Southern states and shows how modern methods of farming are improving living conditions among the Negroes.

Music is furnished by the Tuskegee Institute Choir under the direction of William L. Dawson. — (A. L. H.).

### Negro Progress Shown in Movie "Negro Farmer"

"The Negro Farmer," a United States Department of Agriculture moving picture showing Negro progress in the South has just closed a week's successful run at the Regal theatre located at 47th and South Parkway.

In commenting upon the picture, Phil H. Solomon, manager of the Regal stated that each time the picture was thrown on the screen "the audience applauded and that is most unusual."

Music by the Tuskegee Institute choir under the direction of William L. Dawson is heard at intervals which add much to the effectiveness of the scenes.

## RAM TO ERECT SHOW FOR NEGROES

New Picture House to Be Built In  
Negro Section

H.B. Ram, who for several years owned and operated the State Theatre located in the city building which burned recently and who is now erecting a new theatre building on upper Laurens Street, announced this week that he is planning to erect another building in which he will operate a picture show for colored people.

The theatre is to be known as "The Booker T" and will be erected in the Negro section. Work will start on the building as soon as the theatre now under construction is completed.

The erection of this building for the operation of moving picture show for the colored people is something that has been long needed in Aiken.

## Stepin Fetchit

### Back In Movies

SEP 24 1938

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Sept. 23—(Special) — Stepin Fetchit, the screen's laziest man, who has been on a leave of absence for more than two years, has resumed his cinema work.

Universal studios announced this week that Fetchit will be seen along with Charles Ruggles and Kenny Baker in "Adam's Evening."

Fetchit told newspapermen that he was happy to be back at work on the movie lot and with his wife dancing at the Cotton club the comedian predicts a successful financial year for the Fetchits.

# THEY'RE FILMING RACE MOVIE AT A COLORED 'DUDE' RANCH

Camera 10-17-38

Hollywood Production's "Bronze Buckaroo" and "Harlem on the Range" to Feature Herbert Jeffrey

HOLLYWOOD, Oct. 13—For the first time in the history of the colored film industry, an all-colored talking picture is being filmed at a colored location. Hollywood Productions is filming "Bronze Buckaroo" and "Harlem on the Range," starring Herbert Jeffrey

Murray's Dude Ranch in Victorville, Calif. This is the only colored dude ranch in America.

N. B. Murray and his wife, Leila, purchased this ranch ten years ago. But it was not until two years ago when the Dude Ranch vogue started that they converted the place into a Guest Ranch. Various celebrities, which include Joe Louis and Henry Armstrong are frequent visitors to the Murray Ranch.

The executives of Hollywood Productions, Spencer Williams, Jr., Richard C. Kahn and F. E. Miller decided at a recent confab that Murray's Ranch would be an ideal location due to its natural scenery and the fact that it was a colored ranch. The horses used in both "Bronze Buckaroo" and "Harlem

on the Range" are part of the livestock of Murray's Ranch.

A troupe of forty people, including actors, directors, technicians, sound trucks and cameras all are living on the ranch and enjoying a holiday after each day's work. Murray's Ranch is only two hours from Los Angeles.

Murray's Dude Ranch has become a movie city. Cameras, sound trucks, make up rooms and dressing rooms have been improvised. Cowboys either riding or strolling about with huge six guns. Another factor which gives credence to the films which are centered around Negro ranches, is that it was actually filmed on a ranch owned by Negroes. Mrs. Murray is an official in the Elks and is well known nationally. She attends the Elks Convention each year.

Murray's Ranch is stocked with horses, cattle, chickens, which also are being used by Hollywood Productions in the filming of "Bronze Buckaroo" and "Harlem on the Range," starring Herbert Jeffrey,

## MISS BEAVERS IN NEW RKO FILM



Tommy Kelly and Louise Beavers, shown in a scene from the RKO radio release, "Peck's Bad Boy With the Circus," a Sol Lesser production, starring young Kelly.

Camera 10-22-38  
Dolls High, Pa.

## Oscar Polk Gets Part In Picture "Gone with Wind"

Oscar Polk, considered the outstanding colored actor of the Broadway stage, was signed by David O. Selznick yesterday to portray Polk, the O'Hara's family servant, in "Gone with the Wind."

Polk is the faithful butler who remains at Tara, the O'Hara plantation home, through the Civil War.

Oscar Polk will join the cast which, to date, is headed by Clark Gable as Rhett Butler. The role of Scarlett O'Hara is expected to be announced by Selznick within the next few weeks. Actual production of "Gone with the Wind" is scheduled to start early in January under the direction of George Cukor. Sidney Howard, Pulitzer-prize playwright, has completed the shooting script of Margaret Mitchell's record-breaking novel which has sold more than 2,000,000 copies.

On the stage, Polk has appeared in three Pulitzer-prize plays: "The Green Pastures" by Marc Connelly; "Both Your Houses" by Maxwell Anderson, and "You Can't Take It With You," by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart. Other hit plays in which he has acted are "The Trial of Mary Dugan" and "Once in a Lifetime."

Polk was born in Marianna, Arkansas, but went to New York to pursue his ambition to be an actor on the stage and radio. Now in New York, Polk will report to Selznick international studios immediately after the first of the year.

## 'TB' FILM FOR WORLD'S FAIR

NEW YORK CITY, Dec. 29 — (ANP)—Because of its wide appeal and interest, "Let the People Live," a 25-minute film dramatizing the disastrous effects of tuberculosis, will be shown at the New York World's Fair.

The film will be featured by the National Tuberculosis Association, and is being presented in the Medical and Public Health Building, according to Homer N. Calver, director of health exhibits. The film has an all-Negro cast, with Rex Ingram in the leading role.

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## English Pictures for Colonial Consumption Aimed to Keep Subject Peoples in Bondage

By Robert Hardy

(Special to the Daily Worker)

LONDON.—Twenty-four million British people pay nearly a million pounds a week for seats in Britain's five thousand cinemas. Nearly fifty million pounds a year, that is Britain's Tories have long been alive to the power of the cinema. The very symbol of Diehardism, and a man who throughout his long career has been close to the Intelligence Service, Winston Churchill, told Douglas Fairbanks Senior, more than a dozen years ago: "The cinema will enable us to keep India."

A little optimistic, but it showed in Churchill an ability to adapt his thinking to new conditions.

During the last few years another work with contacts in the innermost circles of imperial strategy, John Buchan, now Lord Tweedsmuir, has quietly but spoke in here, a spoke in there.

During the Great War, Buchan, a trim, mincing Scot with great capacity for work and extremely sound Tory views, was in charge of Britain's "Information"—propaganda to you. He did a good job.

In 1933, discreetly, the British Film Institute was formed. Its purpose—among others—was to assist in the development and stimulation of the study of the cinema as an instrument of education and in-

formation. Its president was John Buchan.

Since that time Buchan's greatest "thriller," a glorification of the spy, *The Thirty-nine Steps*, has been filmed well in Britain.

John Buchan is more than ever a key man in the imperial system. As Governor-General of Canada he gave priceless assistance to Herbert Wilcox, maker of the Neagle-Wilcox Victoria the Great, in ballyhooing the film during the lavish Neagle-Wilcox personal "progress" across the U.S.A. and Canada last year.

### Korda, Defender of Imperialism

Two years ago, Alexander Korda Hungarian-born head of Britain's smartest producing concern, brought in elderly, handsome A. E. W. Mason, novelist, to assist in the making of films for the Empire.

Mason, during the Great War was a very big shot in the Naval Intelligence, and still on excellent terms with the Admiralty—he supports Franco, week-ends with Duff Cooper, Admiralty boss and visits Gibraltar in his own yacht—is the author of "Fire Over England," another story of espionage. Its principal character was Walsingham, creator of the British Intelligence Service.

The film version was a glorification of an offensive form of jingoist patriotism, intended clearly to have a meaning for 1936-37 filmgoers. As Queen Elizabeth, Flora Robson said—"England—I am England!" and that dangerous notion supplied the keynote of a film of

type we can well do without. Pleased, Korda asked Mason to do an original story for him. Korda is now making films which have the effect of arousing jingoistic prejudices.

Paul Robeson was used in one of such stories, *Sanders of the River*, which whitewashed racial exploitation. After that experience, Robeson refused to permit himself to be used in films of such a nature.

Korda then found a new actor, the Indian boy named Sabu, too young to understand the effect of the films he was to play in. His first picture, *Elephant Boy*, was relatively harmless.

His second, *The Drum*, based on the Mason original, was far from harmless. It was the first of the really jingo films which Korda and others will make if permitted. Color, the momentary glamor of violent action and sound technical work made palatable a production which resulted in the creation of dangerous ideas.

At the premiere of "The Drum," laying his hands on the shoulders of Sabu and Desmond Tester, A. E. W. Mason said the film had "no propaganda." In interviews and private statements, he has shown an acute awareness of the need of a new type of film for Indian and Negro audiences.

The U. S. Ambassador, Joe Kennedy, at a recent film banquet, advocated the hands-across-the-sea motif.

Latest recruit for Korda is Sir Robert Vansittart, who, having drafted the general lines of the Victoria sequel for Wilcox—*Sixty Glorious Years*, so help me—is now engaged on a film for the Empire market, a film based on a story by Edward Thompson, who three years ago sounded the alarm in an article in *Time and Tide*.

Britain's vested interests are girding their loins and studying films as imperialist propaganda. Let us keep our eyes skinned.

### Hollywood In England

Many people cannot put into words what they want of films. But they know they are dissatisfied with many pictures. They want, as

they make clear enough when they do get it into words, a greater dovetailing between life and what should be one of its mirrors—the screen.

There remains a minority which, by abandoning itself completely to the deliberately narcotic aims of the average gorgeous Hollywood film, confess openly that it does go to the cinema to forget, to dream, to be Joan Crawford for two hours, to drink well and eat well through a shadow.

The Cinema has had to move over towards these dissatisfied millions. It has had to give some semblance of reality to its films dealing with life as it is.

The new phase, so far as Hollywood is concerned—and the rest of the bourgeois world follows Hollywood's lead for the most part—dates from about 1931, the crisis of the first great U. S. slump, when unemployment, vagrancy and actual starvation faced at least fifteen millions.

A few films, mostly pretty bad, began to give at least some recognition to the fact that most of the U. S. population did not live in luxury M. G. M. palaces, that few enough lived well.

Today we have a goodish proportion of films claiming to reflect ordinary life. Occasionally we get a genuine attempt to show something of the forces that make criminals, for example, "Scarface" (cut to shreds by censors), "Dead End," "Public Enemy" and others.

We get a grappling of sorts with historic careers of real significance, like Muni's "Zola" and "Pasteur," both fairly satisfactory, well worth having; with the question North vs. South antipathy in the U.S.A., as in "Fury" and "They Won't Forget"; with the way Fascists are made, as in "Black Legion" with the hounding of innocent men by bigotry and ignorance, as in "Winterset," "You Only Live Once," and "I Am A Fugitive."

Personally, I am glad of all these films. But they could all have been far better.

The one and only British intellectual who has given clear and adequate thought to the propaganda in Hollywood and British films, Arthur Calder Marshall (see "Life and Letters" Autumn, 1936, and the books "The Mind in

Chains" and "The Changing Scene") thinks this needs watching.

He says: "... all films, which makes pretense of contact with the contemporary world have a sort of half-realism. A situation is created, which the audience can recognize as similar to its own and then it is developed along the lines of a wish-fulfillment. It is realized that discontent can no longer be ignored: so it is recognized. But the causes of discontent are allotted falsely and the solutions are absurd."

Birmingham, Ala. Post  
August 15, 1938

## Dr. Carver's Career Traced In Film Short

The life of Dr. George W. Carver Tuskegee Institute's famous Negro scientist, is the subject of a Pete Smith specialty which opened yesterday at the Alabama Theater.

Narrated in typical Pete Smith fashion, this story of a Negro boy who as a baby was traded for a horse is one of the most interesting short features of the season.

Dr. Carver's youth, his struggles for an education, and his later attempts to find some farm product that would remove his beloved South from its slavery to cotton are handled in sympathetic fashion through the medium of excellent photography.

Most interesting feature of the short feature is the depicting of Dr. Carver's work with the peanut and the products he developed from it.

The only sour note is Pete Smith's pronunciation of "Tuskegee."—F. P.





Paul Robeson was fooled into acting in "Sanders of the River," a Korda film which whitewashed racial exploitation.

## MOVIES

# 'Dark Sands' Stars Robeson

"DARK SANDS," a Walter Fetter production. Screenplay by Robert N. Lee and Peter Rurie. Directed by Thornton Freeland and presented at the Rialto Theatre, with Paul Robeson, Henry Wilcoxon, Lawrence Brown, Wallace Ford and large supporting cast.

By Eugene Gordon

When Paul Robeson told me in Moscow last summer—and told the world through the press somewhat later—that he had finished playing in motion pictures which tended to degrade the Negro, he meant it. "Dark Sands," which came into the Rialto Tuesday, was made before he gave me that interview in the Hotel Metropole a year ago, but it was cited by him as an example of the kind of picture he would prefer to make if called upon to do a film outside the Soviet



Union.

Not that "Dark Sands" is in any sense a perfect picture from the Negro's point of view; it is not. Story writer and producer still struggle with the old stereotypes of singing, dancing and crapshooting blacks and with African backgrounds and desert scenes. But the stereotypes of this time, owing to an intelligence seldom found in such films, are so well integrated with believably life-like situations that the film viewed as a whole has a distinctly progressive tone.

Originally titled "Jericho," after its leading character (Paul Robeson), "Dark Sands" is the story of a Negro corporal who, en route to France with a transport loaded with Negro soldiers and their white officers, is unjustly accused of murder and escapes. Accompanied by a white deserter from the army, he makes his way to Africa and the Sahara desert, where he becomes the leader of a tribe.

In spite of the fact that the Negro soldiers are made to entertain themselves by crapshooting and general monkeyshines, the film, for a number of reasons, is superior to the usual product dealing with the Negro. In the first place, Paul

Robeson appears as a peace-loving graduate of a medical school and all his actions are in perfect harmony with such a character. He is an upstanding, keenly intelligent and natural leader, whether those who follow be black or white.

Henry Wilcoxon plays "Jericho's" captain, who is court-martialed and sentenced to five years in Leavenworth because of the Negro corporal's escape. Released, Captain Mack sets out to find "Jericho" and get revenge. The clue comes when, seated in a London movie house, the captain sees a film travelogue of a salt trek on the Sahara. It is led by "Jericho." Captain Mack hastens from the theatre for the final tracking down of his man.

Robeson does considerable singing, these sequences being among the best of the film. The two main songs are "My Way" and "Deep Desert." The desert scenes, having been taken actually on the Sahara with real Africans, are themselves like a travelogue.

Most of the acting is good, but Paul Robeson easily dominates the film, which is definitely his in more ways than one.

**Colored Players in 'Too Hot To Handle' Paid \$3,000 Per Day**

HOLLYWOOD, (By Harry Levette for ANP)—The "Big bad wolf" can huff and puff in vain at the doors of many local colored film actors and extras this coming winter, for the pay-roll at Metro-Goldwyn studio for their new film "Too Hot To Handle" during the past few weeks has been a godsend to them.

During the past nine days nearly \$3,000 per day has been paid out to the colored players alone. Most all of the members of the Screen Actors Guild, those who did not belong to this powerful and very beneficial union were allowed to work by the studio after securing waivers so they could fill out the numbers required. These received the same rates of pay as guild members, which was attended to by Charles Drubin, capable young militant checker for the guild.

The sum total was the largest amount of cash paid colored movie actors since "Slave Ship" at Fox studio over a year ago when in addition to the stock players, and day players who had worked all through it, 700 were used on a single day. This was the

well-remembered scene of the weltering hell-hole of a crowded ship hold packed with human car-

## "DARK SANDS" STARS ROBESON

By EUGENE GORDON

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tually on the Sahara with real Africans, are themselves like a travelogue.

Most of the acting is good, but Paul Robeson easily dominates the film which is definitely his in more ways than one.

## 389 Theatres Catering To Race Americans

WASHINGTON (ANP)—Movie theatres catering to Negroes in the United States number 389, according to a release from Joseph R. Hutchins, acting specialist in Negro statistics of the department of commerce.

This, says Mr. Hutchins' report, represents an increase of 116 theatres over the list made available in 1937. One hundred and forty-two of the theatres are located in the South Atlantic States; 68 in the Middle Atlantic states; 54 in the East North Central states and West South Central states; 47 in the East South Central states and 16 in the West North Central states. The remaining theatres are located in the Mountain and Pacific states.

Through the cooperation of the Sack Amusement Enterprises of Dallas, distributors of Negro pictures, the tentative list of theatres was made available.

"Although an effort was made to make this enumeration as complete as possible," says the report, "some omissions and errors no doubt have occurred."

Theaters - 1938  
Picture Films, etc.

# Plans Being Set To Present Duke Ellington's Opera Of The Negro To Broadway In '39

By ISADORA SMITH, Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK CITY, Nov. 3—With Broadway seething with legit activities on all fronts, Irving Mills, personal manager of Duke Ellington, entrained to New Orleans Friday to confer with the great musical genius regarding the production of his recently completed opera of the Negro. In the event that Ellington gives the manager his okay, the musical drama would be presented on Broadway early next year with Ellington and his orchestra playing the music.

The opera, which in a sense is an opera, is very different from any such entertainment ever penned. It goes away back to the beginning of Negro America and brings the then new race up to the present generation with its mood and changes in music that only an Ellington could bring into effect.

The new music by the Duke is a score which has been a life time ambition of many times predominated his compositions which have been termed just pop tunes. The opera, backgrounded by the light heart, soul and rhythmic wealth of the colored man, has already been lauded by well known men of music for whom Ellington has played it.

Starting it when he was confined to the hospital this summer, Ellington could have had a backer and been well fixed on Broadway now but he refused because he felt that this was something of the Negro and by the Negro and should be produced by the Negro. Production has been held up because of that have created this sudden new interest in the opus is not known by the writer.

## Three More All-Colored Pictures Finished By Hollywood Studios

**'Gang Smashers,' Starring Nina Mae McKinney  
'Bronze Buckaroo' and 'Harlem Rides the Range'  
Now in Cutting Rooms—Films to Be Released Soon.**

By EARL J. MORRIS

HOLLYWOOD, Nov. 3—The colored film industry has stopped cranking its cameras on three of the best all-colored talking pictures in its history. Million Dollar Productions and Hollywood Productions all finished on scheduled time and all report that no one was injured by on their toes in a friendly competitive way to give the public better film plays.

"Gang Smashers," "Bronze Buckaroo" and "Harlem Rides the Range" will be good film plays for those who love fast-moving action pictures. Due to the support that colored people have given to colored films, both film companies were able to produce more realistic dramas.

This writer spent two weeks or more on location at Murray's Duke Ranch, the only colored ranch in America devoted to guests, to observe the filming of "Bronze Buckaroo" and "Harlem Rides the Range," starring Herbert Jeffrey Harry. Harry was with the "Gang Smashers" unit.

In these three films, which are crowded with punch action, such as gun and fist fights, when they chosen to do a comedy lead with leave the cutting room, the Ne-F. E. Miller. Brooks fell into com-groes of America will see their own portraying all types of roles. The fact that there are two com-panies, it makes both of them keepre, will prove a sensation. These four lads are all products of Lane

Nina Mae McKinney, as an actress, is at her best. Monte Hawley and Lawrence Criner give fine and realistic portrayals. Herbert Jeffrey rides his horse and pulls his six guns in a fashion that will make him loved by black America. Artie Young, who was chosen by Hollywood Productions to have the feminine lead, is an outdoor girl and one of the most beautiful girls to appear on the screen. She graduated to lead parts by her work in "Life Goes On." Spencer Williams, Jr., and Clarence Brooks, both veteran actors, give excellent portrayals.

But the surprise of the films is Lucious Brooks, baritone singer, crowded with punch action, such as gun and fist fights, when they chosen to do a comedy lead with leave the cutting room, the Ne-F. E. Miller. Brooks fell into com-groes of America will see their own portraying all types of roles. The fact that there are two com-panies, it makes both of them keepre, will prove a sensation. These four lads are all products of Lane

## "Let My People Live" Has Tuskegee Institute Premiere

Rex Ingram Stars In All-  
Colored Movie Short on  
T-B Plague

TUSKEGEE, Ala., June 29 (ANP)—"Let My People Live," the movie short with an all-Negro cast which was made on the Institute campus a few weeks ago under the auspices of the National Anti-Tuberculosis association, had its first showing here Monday night in Logan Hall.

With Rex Ingram playing the part of a doctor, the story dramatizes in a simple and effective manner the dangers of neglecting incipient tuberculosis. Professionals in the cast, aside from Mr. Ingram, were Misses Christine Coles and Peggy Howard and Wilbert Smith, all of New York. They were assisted by three students of the Tuskegee Little Theatre, Robert Anderson, Jackson Burnside and Miss Christine Johnson.

The story opens in the Tuskegee Institute chapel with the choir under William L. Dawson chanting a Negro spiritual. Here "Dr. Gordon" is closing National Negro Health week with a brief discourse on the perils of tuberculosis and President Patterson closes the service. From then on, the scenes shift to Negro rural homes and churches as the story gradually unfolds.

The WPA, National Urban League, U. S. Veterans Hospital at Tuskegee and Tuskegee Institute cooperated with the tuberculosis association in planning and producing the picture which, according to a statement by Dr. C. St. Clare Guild, an association official, will be released through state anti-tuberculosis associations.

## THEATRE FIGHT ON IN COLUMBUS

Whites Open New House  
To Combat Negro

COLUMBUS, Ohio., June 29 (ANP)—The civic minded citizens of this city are faced this week with a fight on discrimination in

local theatres on one hand and a fight to save the only Negro-owned theatre on the other.

Their fight in regard to civil rights was when Dr. Alberta Banner Turner lost a case in which she was the complaining witness against the RKO theatre here which allegedly discriminated her in seating arrangements.

Last week a group of young men, all prominent in the city's social and civic life, sought admittance to another downtown theatre.

They were refused and an altercation ensued. Later two of the youths were arrested on a charge of disturbing the peace and assault and battery. The young men are Steve Calmel and Harry Woods.

At the same time, the city's only Negro-owned theatre—The Empress on East Long street—is faced with stiff competition. A new theatre has just been opened across the street from The Empress. It is owned by a white chain operator who has frequently been accused of discriminating against Negroes in his other theatres.

SIoux CITY IOWA JOURNAL  
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 4 1938

## Moving Picture to Aid in Fight on Tuberculosis

The Visiting Nurse association has procured a 15-minute film, complete with musical accompaniment, for use here during the first two weeks after Thanksgiving day in an effort to help combat tuberculosis.

The picture was filmed in and near Tuskegee institute, and an all-Negro cast performs in it. The leading role is taken by Rex Ingram, widely known as De Lawd in Green Pastures.

The association will lend the film to any organization which desires it. The story brings out three distinct facts about the disease: That tuberculosis if neglected ends in death; that tuberculosis discovered early and treated in the modern way is curable, and that tuberculosis may be anticipated and prevented in young people by means of the tuberculin test and the X-ray.

Requests already received and granted for the showing of the picture include West junior school, November 28; Central high school, November 29; Woodrow Wilson junior school, November 30; Quota club, December 1; North junior school, December 1, and East junior school, December 5.

The nurses association also announced that Central high stu-

dents will address 10,000 envelopes for mailing in connection with the Christmas seal campaign.

## Colored Film Sport Short Praised In Sneak Preview

Inserted without announcement in the late show at the neighborhood movie house, "Colored Champions of Sport," the first all-colored sport short aroused considerable enthusiasm Monday night. The film is scheduled to be released on a countrywide scale within the next two weeks.

Dealings with a number of outstanding Negroes in track and field, tennis and baseball, with a special sequence showing Ray at the training camp of Henry Armstrong, the film was produced and photographed by Edward W. Lewis, Harlem newspaper photographer, with script by St. Clair Bourne and Jack Caldwell narrated.

The film is the first of a new series, according to report, which will be produced at regular intervals.

## Dillard To Show Film, 'Negro Artists At Work'

NEW ORLEANS, La.—The widely advertised Harmon Foundation film, "Negro Artists at Work" will be shown at Dillard University on December 4, in conjunction with an exhibition of modern craft work executed in the evening class in Modern Art.

### TO DISTRIBUTE RACE FILMS

NEW YORK, Nov. 25—Numerous new employment opportunities for Negroes in the field of motion picture bookings were forecast this week when International Road Shows, Inc., a firm distributing all-Race movies, announced that it would seek agents in each state to place its pictures with local theatre managers. The firm, located at 630 Ninth avenue, New York City has specialized in Race films for more than 10 years.

# POPKINS DENIES SPLIT RUMOR

By ISADORA SMITH

### Staff Correspondent

NEW YORK, Dec. 8—In a telegram to this department, Harry M. Popkins, executive president of the Million Dollar Picture Company, which specializes in the making of modern all-colored films, denies that Ralph Cooper, producer and head of the organization, had been fired. Said he "Cooper has done a great thing for the race in the film industry. I couldn't live with myself if I let him out now that through him a great business has been built up."

In the further interest of the company, Popkins is en route to New York where Cooper has been for the last month to confer with him on the selection of new talent for the 1939 picture line-up of the company. Should present plans hold, the company will put up six pictures next year with Cooper and other better known race stars playing leading roles.

The latest flicker just completed by the company made its debut at the Million Dollar Theatre in downtown Los Angeles and according to information received, it's breaking all box-office records at the theatre and has been held over for a second week run. The picture, starring Nina Mae McKinney and Monte Hawley, under the title, "Gang Smashers," is said to be the best put out by the company to date showing a definite improvement over past productions filmed by Million Dollar or any other race flicker company.

Ralph Cooper will return to Hollywood within a few weeks to head another all-colored picture as yet untitled. This feature will be ready for national showing early next year.

## BEHIND the SCENES in HOLLYWOOD

By HARRY LEVETTE  
HOLLYWOOD, Calif. — Playing their first film role, Florence O'Brien and Janet Collins, principals in the RKO production, "Run Little Chillun", currently in the Mayan theatre, were given feature parts in "The Great Diamond Scandal", now in production at Monogram studios for Majestic Films release.  
Clarence Muse, who directs "Run Little Chillun", will essay a feature role in the Jim Brady mystery and is said to have arranged the deal for his two "finds".

One of the "finds"—A letter from Baby Joe Gans from Milwaukee says hello to all his many friends of the profess, here and elsewhere. The Babe is physical director at the Urban league there and is turning out large classes of boxers for the diamond belt championships.... Aurelia Le Joie who is back in town after a year's absence, has been attending her mother who passed last week after having been ill for some time.... Dorothy Keane, the Boston beauty whose big chance in Hollywood unfortunately came after she left, writes that she will return to the coast in the spring.

"Gang Smashers", Million Dollar Production's new all-colored cast feature, starring Nina Mae McKinney with Lawrence Criner, turned them away at Million Dollar theatre downtown last Friday. It was the world premiere of the underworld melodrama making history by being the first time a modern picture of this type has been shown first at a downtown theatre where 95 percent of the patronage is customarily white.

The colored fans showed their loyalty though for they not only swarmed out to see it but many turned out in evening dress. However, the edge was taken off the social side of the premier a bit, due to the fact that the picture had to open at 10 a. m., according to the custom of all downtown houses, else cause dissatisfaction among Million Dollar theatre's regular daytime patrons.

Sincere applause rewarded Harry M. Popkin, executive producer, and his brother, Leo C. Popkin, director, for their efforts, just as the big hands and encores gladdened the heart of Art Wallace for his mammoth stage show which followed. Willie and Florence Covan, king and queen of the western dance world, came in for a big slice of this appreciation as they staged the fast, intricate, colorful dance routines.

### RALPH COOPER ONLY SUSPENDED

According to Harry M. Popkin of Million Dollar Productions, Ralph Cooper, general manager and star from the beginning, was not fired as was at first reported from the Popkin offices, but suspended as general manager until time for the making of their new contract which is near at hand.

Meanwhile his status as star remains the same as he is billed for several appearances in conjunction with his latest picture, "The Duke is Tops". As to any differences

between "Coop" and his astute, conscientious, and wholehearted backer, Popkin, they alone know what they are, and are fraught with no more racial angles than if the Jones Brothers of the famous Jones Department store in Chicago should have a disagreement.

Let's hurry with the news. Seemingly ninety and nine bit players are going to have dialogue in "Gone With the Wind", just starting at Selznick-International. And the hateful word "n---" is seemingly in the script ten thousand and ninety-nine times.

Wonder will anyone complain to the censors when it is released.... Wilma Mae Fulcher, charming, talented, and very rare combination of journalist and dancer, has become very popular during the short two months since she left Kansas City, Kas., to adopt California. She is at present working out a dance act for a single act with which she can take the vaudeville stage. Willie and Florence Covan are coaching her in their able way, so she is certain to make good. Meanwhile she is on the staff of the Sentinel, and is doing well in this her other field also.... Clarence Muse and wife were the guests of Dr. and Mrs. S. I. Kestenbaum at their beautiful Westwood Hills mansion last Tuesday. The Kestenbaums, who are some of the most prominent white socialites in Hollywood, had a number of distinguished members of their race as guests also, including Dr. George Sheftel, medical scientist; Miss Natalie Rose, concert pianist, and S. Prayer, civil engineer.

The jitterbugs, most of whom never saw a Greek alphabet, saved the day and stole the show at the fraternity jabberweek at Elks hall last Saturday night. The skits staged by the clubs themselves were not so hot although in the nature of an annual contest.

Stepin-Fetchit and Hattie McDarfel are very busy at Hal Roach's studio; Ernest Whitman is in his third week in "Huckleberry Finn";... Louise Beavers is studying her script for her new picture at Million Dollar studio, "Reform School". Rex Ingram has been back in town a week looking fine and even stronger than when here last to play, "De Lawd" in "Green Pastures". He was sent for by MGM studio to play an important part in their new feature, "Huckleberry Finn".

Theaters - 1938

Picture Films, etc.

# Negro Films Must Tell Truth

## Producers of New Movies Will Lose Audience Unless They Face Facts Squarely, Writer Says

By Loren Miller

(Concluded from yesterday)

One of the reasons why the Lafayette Players flopped was that Negro theatregoers, at first intrigued, finally tired of seeing Negro actors enact roles in dramas that had no meaning in terms of their own lives. Similarly, the producers of this new flood of talkies cannot continue to cash in on the novelty of presenting Negro actors in roles which Negroes do not play in real life.

Nor is this an argument that Negro actors should portray only Negro characters. There is no reason, except for the limitations of popular prejudice, why Negro actors should not portray Irishmen or Frenchmen as white American actors do. However it is obvious that the producers of these Negro talkies are not ready to face the larger problem: they are committed to the proposition that Negro life should be depicted to Negro audiences by Negro actors and since that is their job they must be judged by their work in that field.

They won't do that job well until they realize that criticism directed against Hollywood for its treatment of Negro actors is basically a criticism of Hollywood's distortion of Negro life. And gangster melodramas, of goo-goo success stories, using Negro actors, distort reality just as surely as did "Imitation of Life."

What is required for the job is the simple honesty necessary to turn the camera around and focus it in such a manner that it will catch the phases of our lives deliberately neglected and distorted by Hollywood for cash-and-carry considerations. That is no easy task.

The Negro's place on stage and screen has been fixed for so many years that the tradition sways the

judgment of Negroes themselves and honest whites. The fear that propaganda may creep in and spoil the entertainment value of the films also bulks large and, I fear, is militating against good intentions in selection of themes.

The truth is that every time any Negro steps outside the black belt of his home town to buy a hot dog, select a school for his child, ride a train, look for a job or get married, divorced or buried, he runs into problems arising out of his Jim Crow status in society.

The conflicts that arise out of the Negro's necessary attempts to cope with these problems provide the richest mine of dramatic material available and the producer who forgoes dealing with such situations out of fear of making propaganda films in dooming himself to wasted efforts. He has to deal with them and he has to indicate in his pictures whether he believes existing racial relations are justifiable or unjustifiable. The dilemma impels him to take a "propagandistic" stand either one way or another.

There is no denying the fact that the producers of these new all-Negro pictures are faced with grave problems. The ventures are purely commercial and available capital is still limited. All of the films thus far produced, with the possible exception of the Louis film, are of the cheap variety that Hollywood calls "quickies." There is the possibility that if the ventures prove successful in a financial way larger



Clinton Rosemond being put through the third degree in "They Won't Forget." One of the best pictures of 1937 and of high social content, this film nevertheless gave the Negro the usual Hollywood treatment.

studios may step in and exploit the idea, a not unmixed blessing. There would be more money for the making of adequate films but those studios would bring with them an even larger burden of traditional treatment of Negro themes.

The producers also have the problem of distribution on their hands; seeking profits, they have to consider their market. They make out quite a case for the difficulties of showing certain kinds of film in Southern states. I don't know whether or not a frank play like "Stevedore" could be shown in the South if made into a film.

### Serious Films Appreciated

Nor are there adequate signposts to indicate what kinds of films Negro fans want immediately. That

it. The manner in which Negro audiences received such plays as "Fury" and "They Won't Forget" indicates that serious films are appreciated. Similar treatment of the same or of the thousand and one other important themes will obviously pay dividends, especially since, if made for Negro audiences, they can afford to be even more straightforward. This straightforwardness in turn would compensate for less elaborate treatment that is a necessity in view of lack of funds.

This is not a plea for heavy-footed problem or propaganda films. All that can be asked is that the pictures tell the truth. Truth or the screen will pose its own problems and suggest answers and those answers will be the best possible "propaganda." The Negro theatregoer does very well to encourage an industry that will employ Negro actors; it is even more important for him to appraise such films and remind film makers that their products are going to play an important part in the social trends of the times. Movies, made either for the Negro or the general audience, educate as well as amuse.

Obviously, the Negro press must play an important part in evaluating films that are produced, since the fan is going to rely on its judgment. The business of making films for the Negro audience is still in its infancy and now is the time to help train this problem child in the way it should grow. Nothing can retard a sound growth more than the habit of heaping indiscriminate praise on any effort, however shoddy, if that effort is covered with the mantle of "race pride."

It is too early to predict with finality what we can expect from our new movie makers or whether or not they have either the vision or the desire to focus their cameras in the proper manner. The start has been none too propitious. They are leaning too heavily on exploiting the thrill that comes to the average fan when he sees the Negro actor from the screen with his hat on his head instead of in his hand and far too little on the artistic merit of their pro-

The final decision as to the future of these films rests with the Negro movie fan. It is imperative that he be on the alert. If he is ill-advised and content with cheap Negro films, that is what he will get. The pictures are showing gratifying technical improvement but an announcement of future films include almost nothing to indicate that producers are ready or planning to accept the social responsibility that became their when they went into the business of making pictures. Crass commercialism is far too evident. The present group of producers or another, attuned to his desires

# Brooklyn Theatre Scores Again

An endless chain of smash-hit screen sensations continues as the management proudly presents that hilarious enthralling sepi film

## "God's Stepchildren"



Starring An ALL-NEGRO CAST

ALICE RUSSELL — JACQUELINE ELWIS  
CARMEN NEWSOME — ETHEL MOSES  
ALICE RUSSELL — JACQUELINE LEWIS

## "Let My People Live" Has Tuskegee Institute Premiere

Rex Ingram Stars In All-signal victory has been won for the race, it was revealed, Saturday, to The Pittsburgh Courier and Earl Dancer, Movie Editor of the "Eagle" had sent a formal instruction sheet to all the Motion Picture Studios to refrain from presenting sepi players in "typed roles."

TUSKEGEE, Ala., June 29 (ANP)—"Let My People Live," the movie short with an all-Negro cast which was made on the Institute campus a few weeks ago under the auspices of the National Anti-Tuberculosis Association, had its first showing here Monday night in Logan hall.

With Rex Ingram playing the part of a doctor, the story dramatizes in a simple and effective manner the dangers of neglecting incipient tuberculosis. Professionals in the cast, aside from Mr. Ingram, were Misses Ernestine Coles and Peggy Howard and Wilbert Smith, all of New York. They were assisted by three students of the Tuskegee Little Theatre, Robert Anderson, Jackson Burnside and Miss Christine Johnson.

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# ORDER IS ISSUED BY OFFICE OF WILL HAYS

By EARL J. MORRIS  
Motion Picture Editor

HOLLYWOOD, July 7—A

The Courier platform urged Hollywood to depict Negroes as something else besides "maids," "lazy people," and singers and dancers.

This attitude on the part of the Will Hayes office proves conclusively that they will respect black dollars at the box office.

It was the Courier and Earl Dancer's program for the elimination of "typing the Negro." Refrain from showing the Negro as an inferior person. To stop spreading the obvious propaganda that the Negro was only a domestic, a very lazy person or simply singers and dancers. Now Hollywood will depict Negroes as doctors, lawyers or whatever the various scripts will call for.

Winning of this plank does not mean that we should stop. There are at present only two or three sepi artists under contract to the studios. Bill Robinson and Willie Best are best known. Yet there are more than 25 sepi actors who should be under contract here in Hollywood. We have the remnants of the Old "Lafayette Players" here who should be under contract as bit players, featured players and who have experience as actors and actresses.

So keep on writing to the studios. Don't let this one victory curtail our activities.

Theaters - 1938

Picture Films

## Sensational Film, "Song Of Freedom", Starring Paul Robeson Makes Debut



Series of scenes from the sensational British motion picture, "Song of Freedom," starring Paul Robeson and depicting the struggle of Negroes for freedom. The picture enjoyed great vogue in England, ranking with the earlier Robeson opus, "Sanders of the River," which drew \$85,000 the first night it was shown and established Robeson as one of the greatest actors in English films. Featured with Mr. Robeson is Elizabeth Welch, popular American musical comedy star. "Song of Freedom" is now making its American debut, or should one say, premiere? The picture opens a 4-day run at Pittsburgh's New Granada Theatre, Sunday, Sept. 11.



## Ethel Waters Gets Pair Of Movie Offers

*10-21-33*  
*et seq*  
NEW YORK, Oct. 21—Miss Ethel Waters, tops among singers of the land regardless of race, is entertaining two bids to make a picture in Hollywood that will star either Dick Powell or Mae West. This information reached Harlem from New York this week and was hailed by friends of the famous singer.

In calling Miss Waters, Hollywood is answering a prayer that members of the Race have advanced for years. There is no question but that Ethel is tops and has been leader of all chirpers of songs for years and yet Hollywood employing Race performers has seen fit to overlook her. She figures to "break it up" if given the big time spot being planned for her in moviedom.

### Had Best Spots

Miss Waters, new to big time moviedom is certainly no stranger to Broadway and its subsidiary white ways. She has majored at the top of "At Home Abroad," a thriller for Broadway and she went to town in "As Thousands Cheer." Both productions were tops among the hits of Broadway.

Prior to this Miss Waters headed her own show, "Miss Calico," and three others that had little trouble selling themselves to the great white way. In each of these productions Miss Waters was not only the singing star but the main draw. This was also true of the various Broadway shows wherein Miss Waters was to share the lead with such performers as Billie Dove and others.

## 20th Century To Use 75 In Movie

### Race Players Will Get Good Parts In New Production

By LAWRENCE F. LAMAR  
HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Sept. 9—  
It appears that the 20th Century Fox actor here for screen roles, despite his animosity toward the "deepest South," must turn to that section of the nation for suitable vehicles to display his histrionic skills before any sizeable screen audience. Even Africa, the sepia brethren's native heath, from whence he turns a very face at times, comes to his aid and artistic rescue at times.  
Films advertised to be made with southern locale are closely watched by hep actors, in search of sepia background or foreground parts that are bound to appear in the script. Twentieth Century-Fox that a talking motion picture, "Let Wednesday and the major portion

cast showing the ravages of tuberculosis among colored people will be shown in three colored schools of the county this week.

The picture shows the mode of spread, the results of infection and especially the means of detection of the disease in its early stages when adequate treatment can be expected to give the best results. The picture will be shown at

Sanders high school, Laurens, today at 10 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.

Bell Street school, Clinton, tomorrow at 9:30 a. m. and 7 p. m.

Gray Court colored school, at 10 o'clock Saturday morning.

In addition to the tuberculosis film there will be a farm demonstration picture, recorded music of 400 negro voices and motion pictures of work at Tuskegee institute.

No admission charges will be made. Colored people only are invited and all colored people are invited to attend the showing in their district.

of the remainder of the week called several outstanding local sepia actors to make screen test for roles in a forthcoming film production titled "Kentucky." Among those called were Clinton Rosemond, Lew Payton, George Reed and Eddie Anderson. The production is said to have 75 sepia-speaking roles.

Laurens, S. C., Advertiser  
September 22, 1933

### Tuberculosis Film

### To Be Shown Here

Dr. H. R. Perkins, county director of public health, announced Tuesday that a talking motion picture, "Let My People Live," with an all colored

## Too Much "Racial Equality" For Broadway



By BILLY ROWE *Julius*  
NEW YORK—Photo above gives scenes from the British production, "Big Fella", starring Paul Robeson, the great colored singer-actor, and Elizabeth Welch, the charming American actress. "Big Fella" with a mixed cast of English and American stars, is one of the best pictures Robeson has ever made. In it he heads a white and colored cast

in an action-filled drama, filled with every-day emotions, up to racial equality. It was the first and only Robeson picture not shown on Broadway.

The picture had a record first run in Harlem at the Apollo Theatre, whose management felt that such a production should be seen by every colored community in the country.

# "REFORM SCHOOL," LOUISE BEAVERS' LATEST PICTURE



Scenes from "Reform School," Louise Beavers' latest starring vehicle, presented by Harry M. Popkin, executive producer of Million Dollar Productions, Incorporated. It was directed by Leo C. Popkin with Arthur A. Brooks as supervisor. Center: Louise Beavers, who creates the newest and finest role of her illustrious career as "Mother Gordon," superintendent of the reform school.

Top photo (left): Maceo Sheffield as "Superintendent Stone," predecessor to Miss Beavers, beating up Reginald Fenderson as 19-year-

old "Freddie Gordon." The guard is Monte Nawley as "Jackson."

To photo introduces "Harlem's Tuff Kids." Left to right, Bob Simmons, De Horrest Covan, Eddie Lynn, Reginald Fenderson, Eugene Jackson, and Freddie Jackson.

Bottom photo (left): Louise Beavers and her new guards. Bottom photo (right): a scene on the parade ground of the "Reform School" at flag-raising, with over two hundred boys at assembly.

THEATERS- 1939  
PICTURE FILMS, ETC.

# THE PICTURE WITH TOO MUCH RACIAL EQUALITY FOR BROADWAY PAUL ROBESON IS STARRED



## Select 8 Spirituals For New Dixie Film

HOLLYWOOD, May (ANP)—Eight haunting old Negro spirituals and traditional numbers, together with two original songs, will feature the music in Sol Lesser's new Bob Breen picture, "Way Down South."

The traditional and spiritual songs are "Oh, Dem Golden Slippers," "Nobody Knows de Trouble I See," "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel," "Peter, Go Ring Dem Bells," "Lord, If You Can't Come, Send One Angel Down," "My Lawd is Gwine Ter Rain Down Fire," "Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray" and "Sometimes Feel Like a Motherless Child." 5-18-39

The original songs, written directly for the picture are "Louisiana" and "Good Ground" by Clarence Muse and Langston Hughes, who also wrote the screenplay for "Way Down South." 5-18-39

Besides the solo numbers by Breen, the famed Hall Johnson choir will participate in the singing of a number of the old songs. Musical director for the film is Victor Young.

By Billy Rowe

NEW YORK—Photo above gives scenes from the British production, "Big Fella," starring Paul Robeson, the great colored singer-actor, and Elizabeth Welch, the charming American actress. "Big Fella," with a

mixed cast of English and American stars, is one of the best pictures Robeson has ever made. In it he heads a white and colored cast in an action filled drama, filled with every-day emotions, up to racial equality. It was the first and only Robe-

son picture not shown on Broadway.

The picture had a record first run at the Apollo Theatre, whose management felt that such a production should be seen by every colored community in the country. and induced the Retlaw Film Corp. to offer it for national distribution.

Ask your theatre manager when it will play your local theatre. It's a MUST for every colored theatre-goer in the country.

# WAY DOWN SOUTH MAY OPEN DOORS FOR RACE IN FILMS

By **EARL J. MORRIS**  
Motion Picture Editor

HOLLYWOOD, May 4—Hollywood is watching the filming of "Way Down South" starring lovable little Bobby Breen. A great deal depends upon this picture. Sol Lesser, the producer, has dared to tread upon territory which has long been evaded by Hollywood producers. This picture is successful in start a cycle of films giving Negroes prominent roles.

Ever since the alleged flops of such films as "Hearts in Dixie," "Hallelujah" and "The Green Pastures" Hollywood has avoided making pictures with a large colored cast.

One of the reasons advanced for the failure of those pictures were that they were written by whites. Sol Lesser assigned Clarence Muse in "Two Gun Man From Harlem," and Langston Hughes to write the screen story and the songs.

"Way Down South" is a period picture, it is laid in the Ante-Bellum days of 1850. Clarence Muse and Langston Hughes have tried to capture the emotions and folk songs of that period and place it on celluloid. Another argument advanced was that white could not direct Negroes, due to the fact that they did not know their true reactions to given situations. So Sol Lesser again took a chance and signed Clarence Muse to co-direct the film along with Bernard Vorjous. And believe you me, Mr. Muse is a director. The writer spent three days on the set at RKO studios.

Another theory which was wafted away like wind on the "Way Down South" set was the usual argument that Negroes will not take orders from their own. Muse directs about 300 sepias in addition to about 25 white technicians.

This is an experimental picture of Hollywood. If it clicks it will mean the opening of a new avenue for Negroes. That of writing screen plays and music on the major lots.

It will mean more employment for the Hollywood film colony, because it will launch a series of pictures. It will prove conclusively that Negroes can do something besides act. Muse scripted the film, co-directed it and acts.

We have not as yet had time to read the script, but feel that the story will deal kindly with present day sepias audiences in unfurling a story of Louisiana in slave days. The sugar cane fields have displaced the cotton fields which is the usual film fare.

Muse who also aided in the casting, gave roles to Hollywood sepias rather than importing New York talent. Margaret Whitten, whom you saw as Joe Louis' sister in "Spirit of Youth," and as heroine in "Two Gun Man From Harlem," starring Herbert Jeffrey, along with Jack Carr, who had a role in "Porgy and Bess," have roman-300 sepias are cast.

Ralph Morgan, veteran of the screen and president of the Screen Actors' Guild, has one of the stellar roles.

Cullman, Ala., Tribune  
June 8, 1939

## Adventures of Huck Finn Based On Mark Twain's Own Boyhood Experiences

The river Mark Twain traveled years ago when he wrote "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," which first started him toward fame as a writer, served as the locale of another story, rich in Twain's own experiences as a boy on the Mississippi. For along the Sacramento River steamboats played, and the dash for freedom of Huck and his negro friend, Jim, was enacted for "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," filmed as Mickey Rooney's first solo starring picture, and coming

Saturday for a three day run, at the Cullman Theatre.

As the redoubtable Huckleberry Mickey was in some measure playing Mark Twain as a boy. Twain (then known as Samuel Langhorne Clemens) was the indolent, dreaming boy who fished along the Mississippi and gathered river and Negro lore in the days before the Civil War. The character played by Mickey is from the author's own description.

Twain, the pen name for Clemens, was born at Florida, Missouri, in 1835, and passed his boyhood at Hannibal. His father, known as "The Judge", was a small store keeper and lawyer. It was during this period, when the boy knew and loved the river, that the character of Huckleberry Finn existed before the boy grew up to be a brilliant journalist, then novelist.

## 389 MOVIE THEATRES CATER TO NEGROES

WASHINGTON, July 27—(ANP)—Movie theatres catering to Negroes in the United States number 389, according to a release from Joseph R. Houghins, acting specialist in Negro statistics of the department of commerce.

This, says Mr. Houghins' report, represents an increase of 116 theaters over the list made available in 1937. One hundred and forty-two of the theaters are located in the South Atlantic States; 68 in the Middle Atlantic States; 54 in the East North Central States and West South Central States; 47 in the East South Central States and 16 in the West North Central States. The remaining theaters are located in the Mountain and Pacific States.

Through the cooperation of the Sack Amusement Enterprises of Dallas, distributors of Negro pictures, the tentative list of theaters was made available.

"Although an effort was made to make this enumeration as complete as possible," says the report, "some omissions and errors no doubt have occurred."

## African Trio

Cinema cycles usually begin when some foresighted or lucky producer scores a bull's-eye with a shot in the dark. They usually last until there is no room left on the target. Last week there was a volley of shots-in-the-dark when three major moviemakers simultaneously fired away at the same place, released big-budget pictures chronicling the doings of the white man in Africa. Two bull's-eyes and one clean miss, last week's African broadside practically amounted to a cinema cycle in itself.

Bull's-eye No. 1 was **Stanley and Livingstone** (Twentieth Century-Fox), a \$2,200,000 version of what the New York Herald's James Gordon Bennett Jr. regarded as the greatest news story of all time: the search for vanished British Missionary David Livingstone by the Floyd Gibbons of his age, Mr. Bennett's Henry Morton Stanley. To make the film, Producer Darryl Zanuck sent Mrs. Osa Johnson and a crew of technicians and extras to Africa for six months, had them assemble an authentic, awe-inspiring record of a savage country and people that would have scared Tarzan out of his breechclout. Back in Hollywood, Zanuck turned his album over to his ablest associate producer, Kenneth Macgowan, his ace action director, Henry King (*In Old Chicago*), gave them a foolproof cast headed by M.G.M.'s Academy-Awarded Spencer Tracy.

To improve on the world's greatest news story, the Zanuck version\* equips News-hawk Stanley with a girl, Eve Kingsley (Nancy Kelly), who loves young Gareth Tyce (Richard Green), who, by coincidence, is the son of Publisher Bennett's mortal rival, Lord Tyce (Charles Coburn). But what makes *Stanley and Livingstone* justify the Bennett and Zanuck faith in it is Stanley's long, forlorn safari over a landscape of unearthly birds, noises and people, the last happy chance that brings him face to face with Dr. Livingstone (Sir Cedric Hardwicke). Actor Tracy does not scamp his historic line. Then, in a scene of muted emotional power, Stanley learns that old Dr. Livingstone, whom the world believes to be either dead or the hostage of some savage tribe, is happily busy with God's work, adamant against any attempt to "rescue" him.

When Stanley leaves, his newsbeat has been turned into a crusade, a war not on ignorant bushmen but on learned incredulity. M.G.M.'s wisdom in lending Actor Tracy for his part appears when he delivers, to the jeering Royal Society of Geographers, a four-minute speech that is not only one of the longest but perhaps the most eloquent in cinema history, sounds as if it might be worth a trophy

case of Academy Oscars. Excellent shots:



TRACY & HARDWICKE  
Actor Tracy scamped not.

Stanley foiling a host of murderous native warriors with a brush fire; Dr. Livingstone gaily leading his jungle Sunday school in a rendition of *Onward, Christian Soldiers*.

THEATERS - 1939  
PICTURE FILMS, ETC.

# Paul Robeson Backs New York Group In the Production of Negro Films

## Plan Gets Support Of Many Notables Throughout U. S.

By Eugene Gordon

Paul Robeson last week endorsed the project of the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films and said that he would be happy to be listed among its actors.

Robeson, hero of numerous American and British pictures and of stage plays as divergent in character as O'Neill's "Emperor Jones" and Shakespeare's "Othello," insisted that the situation in Hollywood regarding the Negro would have to be corrected.

"I feel that a lot of this work must be done outside of Hollywood," Robeson said, mentioning Frontier Films' "Heart of Spain," and "People of the Cumberland" as typifying themes around which he would like to see movies done of the Negro.

The present movement for presenting the Negro people creditably in motion pictures began at the Preview Theatre, 1600 Broadway, early this spring. Mr. Emmet May, executive secretary of the Harlem Legislative Conference and vice-chairman of the Permanent Committee for Better Schools in Harlem, with a small corps of helpers, sent invitations to hundreds of persons who, for one and another reason, should be interested in such a venture.

Some of those who responded to the invitation were Edward Lawson, acting editor of the National Urban League's magazine, "Opportunity"; Ferdinand Smith, national vice president of the National Maritime Union; Dr. Lewis Balmuth, instructor at City College; Carlton Moss, Negro script writer; Thomas Richardson, founder and director of the Negro Peoples Theatre of Richmond, Va.; Harcourt Tynes, state



Reading from left to right: Gwendolyn Bennett, supervisor of the Harlem Community Center and chairman of the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films; Paul Robeson, internationally famous singer and actor, who enthusiastically endorses the organization; Marian Smith, executive secretary, and Max Yergan, honorary chairman of the committee. Dr. Yergan is executive secretary of the International Committee on African Affairs and a lecturer on Negro history at the College of the City of New York.

director of the Association for the chairman; Gwendolyn Bennett, "1. Historical - biographical film Study of Negro Life and History; chairman; Ferdinand Smith and based on the historical period and Gwendolyn Bennett, supervisor of Edward Lawson, vice chairmen; lives of such outstanding figures as the Harlem Community Art Center; Marian Smith, of the Teachers Frederick Douglass or Harriet Tubman. Max Yergan, executive secretary of Union, executive secretary; Emmett May, assistant secretary; Dr. Balmuth, treasurer; Jessie Fauset Harris, author of three novels of Negro life; Mr. May.

The script committee made the following interesting report: "The discussion at the meeting was devoted to the type of theme suitable for the projected film. Three types were suggested: 1. Historical - biographical film based on the historical period and lives of such outstanding figures as Frederick Douglass or Harriet Tubman. 2. Film centering around the life of a typical poor Negro family in America today. The variations of this theme are so manifold and rich that the committee does not attempt at this time to elaborate the theme too thoroughly. Such a film recommends itself from the financial point of view, in that it would not require historical sets and costumes and at the same time it does not exclude the biographical angle. For example, Miss Marian Anderson comes from a family which had no economic advantages and she is one of the world's greatest singers today. In discussing this problem it was brought out that there is a danger in putting a primary emphasis on the success-story angle. This would distort the economic situation faced by the average poor or even middle-class family as is so often the case with Hollywood movies.

3. Documentary films such as 'People of the Cumberland,' 'March of Time,' etc. Such a film would be suitable in dramatizing the work of the Temporary Commission on the Condition of the Urban Colored Population and similar organizations. The committee recommends a film of type 2 as its first choice. Types 1 and 3 are its second and third choices, respectively. That is how the matter stands at present.

Emmett May conceived the idea of such a film-producing organization when he was a high school student in Baltimore. He had been arrested for protesting the showing of "The Birth of a Nation." Refused his B.A. at Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C., as punishment for his fight against the segregation of Negro and white teachers on the campus, May became more noticeably social-minded.

His own preference in films on the Negro would be those built around such historical figures as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Nat Turner and Denmark Vesey. Paul Robeson, in giving the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films his support, said that he once approached the question of the motion picture much as he had approached the problem of the theatre; that is, he had thought the player had only to act a part. But in working in films of African life he had seen them turned into "an apology of an empire." He refused to be a party to such attacks on the Negro people.

"I am concerned with the problem of the betterment of the Negro people," Paul Robeson said, "and the films that I identify myself with must be similarly concerned." In the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films he feels that he has found what he has so long sought.

# Four Ink Spots In Film With Crosby

HOLLYWOOD, July 7—The Four Ink Spots, sensational disc and radio stars have been offered a spot in the next Bing Crosby picture it was learned this week. The news now in New York attracted Bing's attention through their release of the now famous "If I Didn't Care," a sweet tune that is taking the country by storm.

While no definite spot in the film has been announced for the quartet it is understood that it will replace the Race Team that has appeared with Bing in films and over the air.

## One of Best

The Four Ink Spots are today recognized as one of the best quartets singing in the East. They have taken Broadway and Harlem by storm with their stage appearances and on the discs as well.

Bing Crosby, like most of the big-time stars are given to right to name certain supporting players for their films, this being a part of the plan to keep them in the proper frame of mind at all times. And in this instance Crosby told the director that he would like to have the Four Ink Spots accompany him.

Rock Hill, S. C. Herald  
June 23, 1939

## Show Health Films At Piedmont Summer School Monday Night

The health education classes of Piedmont Summer school are sponsoring through facilities of the motion picture trucks of Clemson college the showing of the films, "Let My People Live," "Behind The Shadows" and "The Negro Farmer," Monday Night June 26 at 8:30 in the Emmett Scott Auditorium.

"Let My People Live" is composed of an all star Negro cast that depicts a story of tuberculosis. The music heard in this film is furnished by the renowned Tuskegee singers. "Behind The Shadows," is a health picture. "The Negro Farmer" shows methods and results of extension work with Negroes.

The time required to show these three pictures is approximately one hour. There is no admission, and the showing is open to the public.

# Robeson Signs as "John Henry" Star

NEW YORK (CNA) — Paul Robeson, famous actor and one of the top ranking concert stars, will return to the New York stage next season as star of the Roark Bradford-Jacques Wolfe musical drama, "John Henry." Signing of Robeson was announced by producer Sam Byrd as the internationally famous star sailed for England to fulfill a film contract.

Robeson, absent from America for several years, returned a month ago for a Summer theatre revival of "The Emperor Jones." He has spent the past years in stage, film and concert work in Europe.

Under current plans, "John Henry" will go into rehearsal in September and make a short road tour before arriving on Broadway.

# Better Negro Films Urged by Robeson

NEW YORK (CNA) — Paul Robeson recently indorsed the project of the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films and said that he would be happy to be listed among its actors.

Robeson, hero of numerous American and British pictures and of stage plays as divergent in character as O'Neill's "Emperor Jones" and Shakespeare's "Othello," insisted that the situation in Hollywood regarding the Negro would have to be corrected.

"I feel that a lot of this work must be outside of Hollywood," Robeson said, mentioning Frontier Films' "Heart of Spain" and "People of the Cumberland" as typifying themes around which he would like to see movies done of the Negro.

## Movement Began in Spring

The present movement for presenting the Negro people creditably in motion pictures began at the Preview Theatre, 1600 Broadway, early this spring. Emmet May, executive secretary of the Harlem Legislative Conference and vice-chairman of the Permanent Committee for Better Schools in

Harlem, with a small corps of helpers, sent invitations to persons who, for one and another reason, would be interested in such a venture.

Out of this and subsequent meetings there emerged the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films. These were the officers chosen: Max Yergan, honorary chairman; Gwendolyn Bennett, chairman; Ferdinand Smith and Edward Lawson, vice-chairmen; Marian Smith, of the Teachers' Union, executive secretary; Emmet May, assistant secretary; Dr. Balmuth, treasurer; Jessie Fauset Harris, chairman of the script committee.

Robeson, in giving his support to the movement, said that he once approached the question of the motion picture much as he had approached the problem of the theatre; that is, he had thought a player had only to act a part. But in working in films of African life he had seen them turned into "an apology of an empire." He refused to be a party to such attacks on the Negro people.

"I am concerned with the problem of the betterment of the Negro people," Robeson said, "and the films that I identify myself with must be similarly concerned."

In the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films he feels that he has found what he has so long sought.

## A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

From the press department of the George Randol Productions in Hollywood comes an announcement that this company which boasts of being "the first major, all-Negro owned and directed company with all colored casts, ever established in the history of the Negro" and "an aid to the race's economic situation through the avenue of a new employment source," has just moved "into its lovely studio in Hollywood."

The company announces that "its first picture will be released in the immediate future to more than 600 theatres throughout the United States and to many foreign countries."

This is great news and the company has a great opportunity to get out of the rut into which all motion picture producers have reclined in producing films of alleged Negro life.

It would seem that in the future there will be no excuse for placing on the market the kind of films that have for so long insulted and traduced colored Americans.

There is no greater source of clean, inspiring and educational cinema material than American Negro life, and now that we have a first class, properly financed and efficiently operated picture company, it is to be hoped that it will take steps to remedy the wrong that has been done.

We believe that we are speaking for the great majority of Negro movie patrons when we say that colored people are sick and tired of so-called race pictures that portray us as clowns and criminals.

Our history has been so replete with the drama of struggle, ambition and achievement that any producer should find ample material for pictures that will be a credit and inspiration to us.

We wish the George Randol Productions every success, and we believe that success will be assured if the company remembers that the Negro public is fed up on libelous mediocrity and wants pictures of which it can be proud.

# LOUISE BEAVERS IN 'REFORM SCHOOL,' NEW MILLION DOLLAR FILM



Scenes from "Reform School," Louise Beavers latest starring vehicle, presented by Harry M. Popkin executive director of Million Dollar Productions, Inc. It was directed by Leo C. Popkin, with Arthur A. Brooks as supervisor.

Center: Louise Beavers, who creates the newest and finest role of her illustrious career as "Mother Gordon," superintendent of the reform school.

Top left: Maceo Sheffield as "Superintendent Stone," predecessor of Miss Beavers, beating up Reginald Fenderson as 19-year-old "Freddie Gordon." The guard is Monte Hawley as "Jackson."

Top photo, right, introduces "Harlem's Tuff Kids." Left to right: Bob Simmons, De Forrest Covan, Eddie Lyn, Reginald Fenderson, Eugene Jackson, Freddie Jackson.

Bottom, left: Louise Beavers and her new guards. Right: A scene on the parade ground of the "Reform School" at flag-raising, with more than 200 boys at assembly.

## Everett Brown Gets Part In "Gone With the Wind"

Signed for the part of Big Sam, in Selznick International's "Gone with the Wind" is Everett Brown, who is said to have worked in more pictures than any colored actor in Hollywood.

Brown, who is six feet three and weighs 274 pounds, renders faithful assistance to Scarlett O'Hara, heroine of the famous novel being made as technicolor production starring Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Leslie Howard and Olivia de Havilland, directed by Victor Fleming.

Attracting attention by his gigantic size when he first came to Los Angeles from Weatherford, Texas, as a boy of 18, Brown was hired by Director Louis Gasnier, to play in "Kismet", when the director saw him, on Hollywood Boulevard. That was in 1921. Since then Brown has appeared in more than 200 pictures. He specializes in playing giant savages, and his narrowest escape came in a "Tarzan" picture, when a wire broke during a tree-top stunt, and the "ape" dropped him.

## Only Negro Movie Company Shows Marked Advances

By RUBY B. GOODWIN

LOS ANGELES, Calif., Apr. 27 (ANP).—At a recent meeting of stockholders and friends of the George Randol Productions, Inc., the public became acquainted with the rapid growth of the corporation.

In a short address given by the president-director of the corporation, George Randol pointed out that the success of the corporation was not of mushroom growth, but was the results of seven years of intensive and extensive planning and investigation.

Randol, through his association with many of the major Hollywood companies, particularly R. K. O. where he was under contract for a long time, is one of the best informed Negroes in the field of motion pictures. Curtis Taylor, prominent Negro attorney, is legal counsel for the corporation

and is one of the directors. The first feature will shortly go into production and, according to the director, will be a saga of Negro life with locale set in the heart of a small Negro community.

# Black Heroes of Past and Present To Be Cast In Film

To Make Series of Pictures of Race History

ish American war, Phillipine and Mexican border warfare, his life contained plenty of dramatic action. Hundreds of players as soldiers and civilians will be necessary, and stirring realistic battles fought during the various episodes will be filmed.

## Hattie McDaniel Gets "Mammy" Role In "Gone With The Wind"

By RUBY B. GOODWIN

HOLLYWOOD.—(ANP)—Hattie McDaniel has walked off with the coveted role of "Mammy" in the Margaret Mitchell sensational best-seller, "Gone With the Wind," according to announcement made by Selznick-International studios at Culver City.

Many sepia actresses were tested for the part. Studio officials insisted that the role be interpreted with dignity and earnestness, as the mammy in "Gone With the Wind" is more than a servant. She is a confidant, counselor and manager of the O'Hara household.

Miss McDaniel has added greatly to her following in the current releases, "The Shining Hour," starring Joan Crawford, and the "Mad Miss Manton," starring Barbara Stanwyck. She has just recently completed "It's Spring Again" at the Hal Roach studios.

## New All-Colored Comedy Proves To Be a Hit

By ROBERT A. FLYNN

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., July 20.—"Midnight Shadow," the melodramatic comedy produced by George Randolph Productions, was previewed in three theatres during the week of June 29. The favorable reactions from the three audiences surpassed all expectations. The comedy was so funny that roars of laughter smothered the dialogue in many spots. Few audiences have been held in such rapt attention. The coherence of the plot, the fine scenic beauty and rich costumes made a grand impression. The audiences in the three houses were well pleased with the entertainment value of the masterly interwoven elements of drama and comedy.

The easy, natural acting of the performers gave the spectators a pleasant surprise; and many such comments as: "It is far superior to 'Green Pastures'; 'It is the

best all-Negro cast picture yet produced"; "The human interest and splendid technique displayed are such as only a colored director can draw out of his people"; "It is an indisputable piece of cinema art", and many other similar comments were heard.

The thread of mystery surrounding the murder of Mr. Wilson (Rosemond), held the audience spell-bound while they tried to guess who committed the crime.

The entire cast gave fine performances as a group with personal laurels hard to award. There seemed to have been an esprit de corps that called the best from each character at all times.

"Midnight Shadow" will be released generally after the 15th of July. Ask your theatre manager when it will play your nearest theatre.

# Paul Robeson's Return Is Victory For Negro Motion Picture Producers Here

Actor Is Listed As Member of The Greater Committee For Better Negro Films

## Negro Film Star Was Popular Athlete

NEW YORK.—(CNA)—Paul Robeson this week endorsed the project of the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films and said that he would be happy to be listed among its actors.

Robeson, hero of numerous American and British pictures and of stage plays as divergent in character as O'Neil's "Emperor Jones" and Shakespeare's "Othello," insisted that the situation in Hollywood regarding the Negro would have to be corrected.

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In the Greater New York Committee for Better Negro Films he feels that he has found what he has so long sought.

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Robeson in giving his support to the movement, said that he once approached the question of the motion picture much as he had approached the problem of the theatre; that is, he had thought a player had only to act a part. But in working in films of African

By HARRY LEVETTE  
LOS ANGELES, (ANP)—Responding to the desire to see real life of the race depicted on the screen, Harry M. Popkin, executive producer, his brother, Leo, director, and Arthur Brooks, unit supervisor of Million Dollar productions, have decided to produce a series of pictures built around actual facts of the Negro in history.

There has been noticed an increasing distaste for pure fiction, especially in all-colored cast pictures, increased doubt by the fact that Negroes are conscious that Hollywood found a source of real entertainment in the lives of great men of the other group. Having thrilled to "The Life of Louis Pasteur," "The Life of Emile Zola" and similar stories, they welcome gladly the Pete Smith short from MGM, "The Story of Dr. Carver."

Million Dollar production's research department has already delivered to Harry Popkin data on such pre-Civil war figures as Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Nat Turner, Peter Still and Charity Still. Still farther back in the Revolutionary period appear the names of the Immortal Crispus Attucks, Peter Salem, Solomon Poor, Beach Sampson, Phyllis Wheatley, Benjamin Banneker and Richard Allen.

In the Reconstruction period, that time that tired men's souls appear Booker T. Washington, Governor Pinchback, Lieut. Gov. William Dunn, T. Thomas Fortune, Bishop Lee, B. K. Bruce, Robert Smalls, W. S. Scarborough and others, while in current history there is material for films in the lives of such as Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Blind Tom, Black Patti, Florence Mills, James Weldon Johnson and others. Of course, a full length feature could easily be made of the great Dr. Carver, and no doubt one would be necessary to do him real justice.

The new cycle of films is scheduled to start out with the exciting life of Col. Young, that noble soldier who but for the hand of fate would have led the American troops to France as did Gen. Pershing.

Starting with his boyhood, graduation from West Point, the Span-

THEATERS- 1939  
PICTURE FILMS, ETC.

# PREDICTS PICTURE WILL BE WORSE THAN 'BIRTH OF A NATION'

By EARL J. MORIS  
Motion Picture Editor

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. 2—Clinton Rosemond, film actor who portrayed the title role in "Life of Dr. Carver," will not have a role in "Gone With the Wind." It is alleged that this action provoked the remark from an official: "Dr. Rosemond is too polished, for a role." places the Negro in an inferior position. Write! Write! Write to Clark Gable and Oscar Polk, all others were chosen by competitive measures. For the colored roles, an average of thirty actors tried out for each part. Each before the producer, Director Cukor and crew were required to speak lines which was filled with the word "n . . . r."

While the book of Margaret Mitchell contains the objectionable word throughout, the script also contains the word. It has been pointed out that to remove the insulting word would remove "the meat" of the story. But it has been a standing objectionable word for years in the Will Hayes office. It is our opinion that the word will be removed before the picture is ready for public consumption.

A great many of the colored movie audiences may react to the film as they did D. W. Griffith's "Birth of a Nation." In 1851 a woman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, wrote the immortal book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which bolstered public opinion to such an extent that it subsequently brought freedom to the Negro. In this advanced age another woman, Margaret Mitchell, pens a story that will greatly retard the race.

We cannot criticize the colored artists too severely for their attempt at racial suicide, because they are economic slaves. The readers who object to the word "n . . . r" may do this about it. Write to Will Hayes, Motion Pictures Producers Association, 5504 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, Calif., and demand that the word be deleted and all material that

**TB Film to  
Be Shown  
at N.Y. Fair**

NEW YORK—"Let My People Live," a twenty-minute educational motion picture, starring Rex Ingram, who played Christophe in the WPA Federal Theatre Project last May, will be exhibited at the New York World's Fair in 1939. It is the first picture to be accepted for exhibition in this building.

Desiring to make a film of the ravages of tuberculosis among colored, the National Tuberculosis Association requisitioned the Federal Theatre Project last May for actors. The result was that Rex Ingram, Peggy Howard and Merritt Smith of the cast of "Haiti" were lent to the association and immediately sent to Tuskegee to

make the film.

## Eldridge at Arcadia

NEW YORK—Jose Glaser has Roy Eldridge opening this week for an indefinite stay at the Arcadia Ballroom in New York.

## Film Artists Association For London

Robeson Conveys  
His Greetings To  
Inaugural Meeting

By WILLIAM HARRISON

LONDON (AP)—Since the chief means of livelihood for most Negro residents in London is acting in the films, is extras and featured players, great significance is attached to the formation of the Colored Film Artists association, whose purpose is to look out for the social and economic welfare of the actors.



ROBESON

The association was called into being because in many studios Negroes have been denied privileges extended to white extras; they have been underpaid and barred from canteens; even stars have been occasionally subject to discrimination. It will endeavor to prevent pay-cuts, the employment of artists through unlicensed agencies, and it will seek to wipe out racial discrimination in studios.

A message of greeting from Paul Robeson, dean of Negro actors in London, was read at the inaugural meeting, which was endorsed by the Film Actors association, the Cine-Technicians, the Electrical Trades Union, and the Amalgamated Engineers' Union.

# FARINA OUTGROWS MOVIE GANG. TAKES UP DIRECTING

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (WS)—Our Gang comedies have been standard fare for theatre goers for many years and one of the best known members is "Farina," the little boy who was taken for a girl for many years. Today he has arrived at that awkward age and Hollywood has nothing for him to do.

But this has not caused Mrs. Florence Haskins, mother and guide of the youth's theatrical life to despair. Notwithstanding the limitations placed on people because of color in Hollywood, she has kept "Farina" in touch with the motion picture industry by getting small parts in feature length pictures and adding to his knowledge with intensive study.

"Farina" will soon graduate from high school where he has been studying directing and lighting, very important phases of the motion picture industry. In an attempt to get in a company where he will get the best chance, he plans to enter the George Randol Productions, Inc.

In adding "Farina" to his roster, George Randol is getting a person who has literally lived in the motion picture industry.

Soon after Our Gang comedies were started by Hal Roach, "Farina" was selected to be the screen sister of Sunshine Sammy Morrison and the impression of a small child in ill fitting clothes was flashed to the world.

After Sunshine Sammy outgrew his roles, "Farina" remained with the gang and finally became the colored boy in the series.

His fame grew and the youth made a small fortune in pictures. His mother has been his guiding light and has been able to save his earnings better than the parents of any other colored child in the industry. Today she is a successful real estate operator.

## 'Birth Of A Nation' Film Gets Objectors In Trouble

They Caused Arrest of Theater Manager, and Now  
He's Suing Them.

ORANGE, N. J., Jan. 26—Dr. Harry Mickey and Dr. Theodore Inge, who organized their mission and other action had protested the showing of failed to halt the picture. The grand jury failed to indict Rettig, who immediately tried through their counsel, Roger M. Yancey, to have the case dismissed. Rettig, arrested re-submitted to the grand jury.

Rettig was held for the Essex

## Has "Gone With the Wind" Role



Hattie McDaniel, above, who has walked off with the coveted role of "Mammy" in the Margaret Mitchell sensational best-seller, "Gone With the Wind," according to an announcement made by Selznick-International studios at Culver City, California.

Many sepia actresses were tested for the part. Studio officials insisted that the role be interpreted with dignity and earnestness, as the mammy in "Gone With the Wind" is more than a servant. She is a confidant, counselor and manager of the O'Hara household.

Clark Gable as Rhett Butler, and Oscar Polk, former star of "The Green Pastures," as Pork, are the only other roles which have been

definitely assigned.

Miss McDaniel has added greatly to her following in the current releases, "The Shining Hour," starring Joan Crawford, and the "Mad Miss Manton," starring Barbara Stanwyck. She has just recently completed "It's Spring Again" at the Hal Roach studios, along with Stepin Fetchit.

## Rex Ingram Sensation In 'Huckleberry Finn'



Mickey Rooney and Rex Ingram in "Huckleberry Finn."

HOLLYWOOD, February—A Negro actor today is enjoying the warmest public reception for a motion picture performance that has been accorded one of his race since Louise Brooks became a sensation in "Imitation of Life."

The man is Rex Ingram, probably the finest Negro actor in America today. The role is that of Jim, the runaway slave in Metro Goldwyn-May's dramatization of Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn." Mickey Rooney is starred as Huck Finn.

When Producer Joseph L. Mankiewicz set out to make "Huckleberry Finn," he and Director Richard Thorpe planned to make the high

point of the picture the ever-present love for freedom in every man. This theme was centered in Jim, the slave whose life was wrapped in his desire for a free life, and the understanding of freedom which this great man brought to a river boy.

Since the role of Jim was literally a co-starring one with that of Huck, as played by young Rooney, M-G-M

wanted the greatest available Negro dramatic actor. Rex Ingram was chosen. Ingram, who played "De Lawd" on the screen in "Green Pastures" and did several Broadway plays, was appearing in New York in "Sing Out the News" at the time "Huckleberry Finn" was being planned.

Although not a singer and dancer, he was a hit with the "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones" song, during which he danced. He was brought to Hollywood for the Jim role and today, as "Huckleberry Finn" is made ready for release around the nation, it is predicted he will be a sensation.

Already, the picture has been previewed twice and it is a remarkable thing that half of all audience reaction cards turned in have praised his performance. Such reaction for a Negro actor has never been experienced in Hollywood before. Meanwhile, Ingram has returned to the Broadway stage to wait until Hollywood beckons again with another fine role.

# Warns Colored Companies Their Films Must Be Good

## Cooper Produces New Show

Max Fellerman, RKO Film Buyer, Says Producers Must Realize their Pictures Will Have to Be Sold on Merit and Not By An Appeal to Race Pride.

By BILLY ROWE

NEW YORK, Aug. 10.—Max Fellerman, chief picture buyer for the vast RKO Eastern chain of theatres, who proved his high regards for the colored theatre-going public just a few weeks ago, let off with a bit of sound advice in an exclusive interview. Ralph Cooper who is scheduled to last week as he informed this return to the coast the current writer and Ralph Cooper that his week for another starring role in company would always be in the der the Million Dollar Production market for good colored pictures. banner, will go into plans whereby

Getting into the meat of his con-that company will be in a conversation, Mr. Fellerman stated to import top name talent to its that the time has long since pass-shores for a stronger drive to ed when a colored audience will wards the fulfillment of more and go to see a picture just because it's greater all-colored pictures. On this colored. If it's a good picture, then trip Cooper hopes to take Pigmear the people will support it which Markham with him for a co-star-proves that there is an open field ring role in his next flicker. With for the right kind of all-colored three theatres in Harlem, RKO moving picture company. In the is a most important cog in the past any number of get-rich-Wall-wheel which is expected to event-ingfords have entered the field and ually roll all-colored pictures to stuffed the market with inferior that desired success in the world products. That in a large measure of entertainment.

has done much to build up a bad taste in both the buyers and consumers mouths, but each time there is that exception to the rule, RKO is open to be sold.

As said before, said he, there is a field for all-colored pictures, but those who make them must remember that they are competing with every film company in the business and their pictures aside from being just as good, must carry enough name value to draw them in. No picture company can get away with an inferior cast. If colored companies are to be of any value they must cast the Ethel Waters, the Bill Robinsons, the Count Basies, the Duke Ellingtons, the Ella Fitzgeralds and the name values of the race that have done so well through this and other generations on the legitimate stage and in the nite clubs and dance halls.

With these thoughts in mind,



Ralph Cooper, left, well known motion picture star, returned to his first love, the stage last week, to produce a new review now playing at the Burbank theatre in Los Angeles. Here he is shown during a pause between acts talking over the new venture with his co-partner, M. Pollack. (Atlas Photo).

# PRINCIPALS PREPARE FOR MILLION DOLLAR'S 'ONE DARK NIGHT'



Carrier  
9-9-39

Paula Treadville

Left: Harry Rose, Hungarian cosmetician, with long record on Broadway and now rated as one of the best makeup men in Hollywood, is shown making up Betty Treadville for her part as Hannah in Million Dollar Production's "One Dark Night." She is leading

lady to Manton Moreland, the famous comedian. Rose has developed special formulæ for the skins of colored players.

At right: Manton Moreland and Josephine Pearson as father and daughter in "One Dark Night."

# Cut Objectionable Words From "Gone With Wind"

By RUBY BERKELEY GOODWIN

HOLLYWOOD—(ANP)—Negroes who have waded doggedly through the 1200-odd pages of Margaret Mitchell's first book and best seller, "Gone With the Wind", may have wondered just what Hollywood would do about many objectionable terms which Miss Mitchell used. To the casual observer it seems that Miss Mitchell had heard none of the nicer terms used when speaking of Negroes.

Nor did she lose any sleep wondering whether they should be called Afro-Americans, or other polite forms to designate that the people she referred to were descendants of former African natives. In fact, Miss Mitchell used a term very frequently heard on Central avenue by the same people who are so bitterly opposed to the terms Miss Mitchell used.

**OUT ENTIRELY**  
It is with decided relief that I can report, from no higher authority than George Cukor, director for the opus, that the objectionable term "n-----" which was used thousands of times (to put it at a moderate figure) by

Miss Mitchell, has been cut entirely from the script of "Gone With the Wind". Only in a very few instances will the term "darkey" be allowed.

Not only will all objectionable terms be omitted but the picture will present Negro characters in lovable, intelligent, brave roles. They will speak dialect, of course. It must be remembered that prior to the Civil War very few Negroes spoke anything else.

The script of Mammy which Hattie McDaniels is now seriously engaged in studying gives this actress a role that calls for dignity as well as touches of humor. Mammy is to be portrayed as the literal ruler of the O'Hara household. Not only does she boss the fiery Scarlett, she upbraids the sympathetic Ellen for fooling with "low-down po' white trash" (this term is left in the script) and when the plantation meets with reverses

Race Characters

To be Depicted

In Loveable Roles

it is the ingenuity of Mammy and the faithful "Pork", played by Oscar Polk, which causes the O'Hara household to fare better than the estates of their neighbors.

Mammy is not only a dietitian, she is also a beaming Beatrice Fairfax who gives Miss Scarlett advice on how to win a husband. And if the ending is not changed, the sympathetic arms of Mammy will shelter a bitter, ruthless, but completely changed Scarlett at the end of the picture when the one man she has always wanted, Rhett Butler, walks out of her life.

**OKAYED BY SOUTHERNER**  
Readers may be surprised to learn that many of the characters were given contracts upon the final O. K. of Susan Merrick, technical adviser who is Miss Mitchell's representative in Hollywood. Miss Merrick has insisted on the actors maintaining dignity.

She explained this to studio executives when she said one day in conference: "In the finer southern homes, the servants are not expected to be clowns. They reflect the dignity of the people they work for. Many people without a southern background do not know that this distinction exists. Many times, the Negroes though in the capacity of servants, actually ran the estates, attended to much of the business, and treated their bosses as though they were children."

However, remembering what Hollywood did to "Green Pastures" we shall have to await the final shooting to know whether the Negro theatre patron shall send orchids or brickbats to Hollywood for attempting to screen a very difficult and highly controversial story.

Washington, D. C. Post  
May 28, 1939

## Fambus Negro Reveals Many Unique Talents

Clarence Muse Takes  
Place Among Those  
Who "Do Everything"

By Melrose Gower

HOLLYWOOD MAY 27

Many-sided geniuses are not entirely unknown in Hollywood, where congeries of talents every now and then show up in the person of one individual.

Charles Chaplin and Harold Lloyd produce, write, direct and star in their own productions. Cecil B. De Mille does everything but act. Yet, despite these notable one-man bands, Hollywood currently is talking about Clarence Muse because of his many contributions to "Way Down South," which stars Bob Breen.

Muse conceived the story, wrote it in conjunction with Langston Hughes, noted Negro poet and author of the stage hit, "Mulatto." He wrote for it two original songs which young Breen sings. One of them, "Louisiana," may become a hit to rival Muse's earlier "Sleepy Time Down South."

That's not the half of it. Muse also plays the important role of Uncle Caton, privileged major domo of a Louisiana plantation in pre-bellum days, and sings in his deep, rolling bass. He hand-picked the many Negroes of the cast. When currently it comes to directing those Negroes in the singing of spirituals and in the execution of the amazing cane harvest dance, Director Bernard Vorhaus yields the megaphone to Muse, sits back while he takes over.

**Makes His Cast Work**

Muse knows every one of his dancers by name. Sitting on the cane field set with its background of slave quarters, mules, pickaninnies and tall oaks, he singles

out individuals, works them expertly into the ensemble. The set is so big (it takes up two huge sound stages) he employs the loud-speaker system. Into the mike he calls:

"Come on there, Darby! Cross over front of Ruby! Leap! Leap for joy! Scissor them legs!"

Or—"Give, Lulu! When I says give, I means give!"

Though a law graduate of Dickinson, Muse speaks to his people in the vernacular of Central Avenue, Los Angeles' Harlem.

As if all these varied contributions to "Way Down South" were not enough, Muse himself likewise carried out the extensive research needed to provide the authentic background of romantic New Orleans in 1850, and of a great plantation in the bayou hinterland.

To the writing of "Way Down South," Muse brought an ideology based on first-hand study of present-day Louisiana and records of the past.

**Shows true South**

"Louisiana before the war," he said, "was different from the rest of the South. The Creoles, descendants of the Spanish and the French, made it so. Relationship between master and slaves was personal, feudalistic, not economic. That's what we've trying to portray in this picture. When you see these black people, you see human beings, not traditional stencils. Anyhow

(with a grin) that's what Langston and I hope you see."

Muse's cane harvest dance, which makes the earth shudder to the beat of thumping feet and voodoo drums, patterns an ancient rite still practised, he says, in the bayou hinterland. Strapping Amazon women, six feet and over, lead it. Hollywood Central Casting couldn't find them for him. So he sent out the call for them over the "We, The People" radio program, and interested auditors turned them up.

This one-man band explodes the legend that Negroes are somnolent. Muse thrives on one to three hours of sleep a night, never more, according to his friends. Restless energy devils him all the time.

## Mount Vernon

The drive-in, open-air theater on the Richmond Highway announces that, besides its latest editions of the newsreels, including shots of the submarine disaster off Portsmouth, N. H., the giant screen this evening will present "Gunga Din," the rapid-fire, action film, co-starring Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks, jr., and Victor McLaglen. This Ben Hecht-Charles MacArthur screenplay will run through Wednesday

night. The following evening, "All Quiet on the Western Front" will be revived to run through Saturday.

# HOLLYWOOD CAPITALIST WILLING TO SPEND VAST SUM ON PRODUCING COLORED PICTURES FOR NEXT YEAR

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., May 1 (By Harry Levette for ANP)—In a move that is destined to write a bright new page in the history of the Negro Race two men best able to aid it through the powerful medium of motion pictures combined forces last week. These were Harry M. Popkin, founder and president of Million Dollar Productions, and Alfred N. Sack, vice president of the Sack Amusement Enterprises.

As is well known now, Mr. Popkin less than two years ago took the most daring step ever made in Hollywood, that of launching and capitalizing a motion picture company, for the production of all-colored cast pictures, with stories depicting phase of modern intelligent Negro life. Regardless of the fact that the field for such films would naturally be small he gambled on the desire of the race-proud Negro public to see their own artists use their seldom demanded talents in the portal of their own lives, and hear their singers and musicals from the screen. The surprised but hearty appreciation with which these pictures were received encouraged him to carry on, and to date five have been made and released, each one being met with greater salvos of praise.

Meanwhile the Sack enterprises had for twenty years been highly successful in the field of motion picture distribution, and for a number of years have sold such all-colored cast pictures as were available, in the cast area they now service, as well as pictures by major studios that featured colored players. So when Million Dollar Productions made its debut, the Sack company watched its activities until convinced it was in the game to stay, then decided to lend it the valuable distribution facilities its features deserved.

Their affiliation means that thousands of colored actors and other employees will pass their pay windows, that might never have had an opportunity to enter the guarded gates of the motion picture industry, reaping the benefits that come from well paid employment. It means also that the feelings, thoughts, emotions, struggles, joys and sorrows of the Negro, such as would seldom if ever be depicted by

studios featuring white actors will be spread out for the world to see like a mighty volume in celluloid.

With these two enterprising men putting their shoulders to the wheel the colored theatre goer will not only be entertained but will learn more about his race than he could have otherwise. The same applies to the other race as it is predicted that in course of time, in fact in the near future, the brand of new and improved movie fare Popkin and Sack have planned for the future will be acceptable in any house in the country.

Another laudable feature about their affiliation, is that no colored attache whom has proven himself capable, and experienced enough to function in the important duties assigned him will be replaced by a member of the other race, or will he be reduced in rank. To the contrary, Miss Alyce Pettus who started with the company in all around office work, has been steadily advanced until recently she was transferred from the offices on the lot to the elaborate suite of offices downtown, which houses the large and varied theatrical enterprises of Harry M. Popkin. As auditor of the Leo C. Popkin Distributing agency, she was the only colored girl in Hollywood filling such a position. Now she is not only the only colored girl in two large staffs there, but the only one occupying such a position in the whole downtown district.

The same applies to the publicity department, headed by Harry Levette who also started with the company. He has their full confidence and appreciation and is given every assistance necessary for his exploitation of their productions.

Of course in the technical department, motion picture photography, Negro artisans have been so tightly barred by the unions that few have had an opportunity to learn, hence as such work cannot possibly be entrusted to any but highly trained men Million Dollar has to continue as all other companies have done that ever attempted to make colored pictures, that is get the men who know. Some day if the unions let down the bars and highly skilled colored men are available they will gladly employ mixed crews. Production, casting, direction, and in fact all departments of a motion picture studio must be manned by

persons specially trained for their work. The director is Leo C. Popkin who is being lauded by some of the severest critics on the trade magazines as having introduced new innovations and methods that bring results veterans twice his age never deemed possible.

The public will be benefitted by the new set-up in that instead of waiting for months for the next Million Dollar Picture, they will have an opportunity to see one almost every month. Hastening to complete the 1939-40 schedule eight major type films are to be released, by the first of the year, and eight more to follow in the next full season.

Cameras are to start rolling on June 6, on "One Dark Night," with Hattie McDaniels, who is expected to have finished "Gone With the Wind," in time to co-star with Mantan Moreland. Two others are also under preparation, one of which is to be the first picture ever filmed around the Negro soldier in America's wars, with the story built around the life of Col. Charles Young. Approximately \$750,000 will be expended on these productions during 1939-40.

Over six hundred theatres will be affected by the new Popkin-Sack merger.

## Hughes Heads West For Scenario Work

NEW YORK—Langston Hughes, famous poet, novelist and playwright, who will return to Hollywood, California, the latter part of this month to resume scenario work. Hughes has been in New York during the past month assisting in working out the summer program of the Harlem Suitcase Players, which he helped to found two years ago. The Suitcase Players will open their summer season July 15 in the little theatre of the 135th Street branch library in Harlem.

# Movie Bug Gets Henry Armstrong; Heads Cast Of All-Colored Movie

By BILLY ROWE

NEW YORK, Sept. 21—Henry Armstrong whose battering fists have brought him fame throughout the world as the greatest little fighter of the generation, laid aside his boxing gloves last week to don grease paint and bask in another kind of spotlight for the star role in an all-colored flicker.

Tentatively titled "Keep Punching," the picture is being produced by the Film Art Studios, Inc., a new addition to the fast growing all colored film producing companies. Cast with some of the best known and talented performers of the Negro show world, the film will feature Willie Bryant, Mae Johnson, Hontree Harrington, Lionel Monagas, Francine Everett Ingram, George Wilshire, Canada Lee and Lee Norman and his Savoy orchestra.

As the star of the piece, Armstrong will depict his own ups and downs in the world of the squared circle. Starting out as Henry Jackson an amateur boxer in the Golden Gloves rank, 'Hank' will fight through the opus becoming the world's great champion despite the well laid plot of a gambling syndicate to keep him from reaching his goal. Lovely Francine Everett Ingram will play the childhood sweetheart role while Mae Johnson will take that of a woman of the world who falls for the champ.

To prove his talents other than a fighter, Henry will sing the title song of the flicker, "Lazy Moon." The picture is being directed by John Klein who is also the producer. Armstrong is scheduled to receive about \$15,000 for his role in the picture which was adapted for screen purposes by Marty Klauber from a specially written story for the champ by J. Rosamond Johnson.

THEATERS- 1939  
PICTURE FILMS, ETC.

# Negroes Get Vicious Treatment in Movies, Film Monthly Indicts

NEW YORK.—One of the most scathing indictments against the motion picture industry's continual featuring of the Negro in films in a menial, servile and irresponsible role appears in the current issue of Film Survey, a pamphlet published monthly by Film Audiences for Democracy.

Written under the title of "12 Million Forsaken," the article said in part:

"The rope that lynches Negroes in America is woven of many strands. One of the toughest of these is the American motion picture, which year after year continues to regard the Negro as a stereotype for submissiveness, irresponsibility, gaiety, and sex perversion.

"Hollywood did not initiate the stereotype, but over the years it has contributed mightily to reinforcing and embellishing it in the public mind. Thus it has contributed to new feeling against the Negro people, as well as vindicating the old."

The article traces this vicious development in the motion picture industry back to David Wark Griffith's "Birth of a Nation," produced by Griffith in 1915. The article terms this picture, which has been revived again and again, as "a cruel libel on the Negro people."

The article points out how this one film, based on Thomas Dixon's book, "The Clansman," used as the program book for the Ku Klux Klan, has carried this libel of a whole people from a section of America to the far corners of the world.

Concluding with the admonition to motion picture producers that they get at the truth of the Negro's contribution to American life and learn that picturing this truth will bring profits, the article ends on this note:

"The true story of the Negro, numbering twelve million of our population, is a vital one. He has contributed mightily to our country and its cultural life. His history is rich in drama and laughter.

"His labor, bravery, the music of his soul, are the stuff of art, the splendid raw material of film creation. It can be

cultivated with profit to American culture, to the producers and to the film audiences of America."

## Nina Mae Sails To Make Film

NEW YORK—Nina Mae McKinney, petite stage and screen star, left the States recently for Jamaica, B. W. I., via the Pan American Clipper Airlines where she is to be starred in "Daughters of the Isle of Jamaica."

The shooting of the flicker was scheduled to begin on August 16 with a supporting cast composed of some of America's foremost colored artists of radio, stage and screen, including Hamtree Harrington, Jack Carter, Ida James, Willa Mae Lane and Emmett "Babe" Wallace.

As Miss McKinney was leaving for Jamaica she emphatically denied to press correspondents that she had made up with Ralph Cooper associated with the Million Dollars Productions of Hollywood.

She is now under exclusive contract to Lenwal Productions Inc., New York to make several pictures in which she is to be starred. She also states that she will not make any more pictures for Million Dollars Production in Hollywood, according to the Press Relations Department of Lenwal Productions.

Off to Make New Flicker



MISS NINA MAE McKINNEY, petite stage and screen star, who recently sailed for Jamaica, B. W. I., where she is scheduled to be cast in the leading role in "Daughters of the Isle of Jamaica."

## Film Company To Make Six Negro Pictures

HOLLYWOOD—(A N P)—Coming in response to thousands of requests that Hollywood cast Negro players in productions giving a true picture of the aspirations, heartaches and achievements of the 20th Century Negro, Supreme Pictures corporation announces the launching of a large production schedule which calls for six all-Negro pictures each year.

According to announcement by A. W. Hackel, president of the film company, Supreme Pictures starts production immediately on the first in a series of family pictures featuring the Lovejoys, a wealthy Negro family of North Carolina. "Lovejoy Family in Harlem", the first picture to be produced, tells the romance and heartaches of this family, of wealthy southern planters who go to Harlem to give their children the desired social background. Harry Fraser will be the director.

Clarence Muse, versatile actor, writer and director, has signed a three-way contract with Supreme Pictures which extends over a period of three years. Muse will star in the Lovejoy opus as the father, a Tuskegee graduate and successful farmer. Aside from starring honors Muse will be used as assistant director and will collaborate with a group of staff writers on each story.

For the first time in screen history, the life of the upper strata Negro will be paraded before audiences. Instead of the weather-beaten shacks and log cabin churches used to generally typify a Negro locale, residences and apartment houses patterned after the Paul Williams style of architecture will be shown, while the church scenes will show structures equally in dignity and designed the famed Abyssinian church of greater New York.

It is interesting to note that Supreme Pictures Corp., is not a new company, nor has it any promotion scheme to offer. An independent company of long standing the directors are adding this series of Negro pictures to an already full production schedule.

# Accuse Movie Industry Of Pandering To Prejudices Against Negro Group

NEW YORK, Aug. 11.—One of the most scathing indictments against the motion picture industry's continued featuring of the Negro in films in a menial, servile and irresponsible role appears in the current issue of Film Survey, a pamphlet published monthly by Film Audiences for Democracy. Written under the title of "12 Million Forsaken," the article said in part:

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"His labor, bravery, the music of his soul, are the stuff of art, the splendid raw material of film creation. It can be cultivated with profit to American culture, to the producers and to the film audiences of America."

## Truer Acting, Fresh Plots, Smart Dialogue Now Loom In Offing

HOLLYWOOD, Cal.—George Randol, president of George Randol Productions, and Bert Goldberg, president of Bert Goldberg and Port, Inc., and West coast representative of International Road Shows, reached an agreement for a merger this week that will make history in the Negro motion picture industry.

These two potent factors in production and distribution of motion pictures for theaters that get most of their support from members of the race, have long realized the need for stabilization in this field.

Persons interested in the production and distribution of this type of motion picture, have for years sought a perfect solution for the problem that faces each producer in this field, that of finance.

Because of the limited number of theaters available for the product, capital was not easy to attract. When a person was found with the needed money, their demands were such that no profit would come to the producer or the pictures would be little different than the ones generally made by white people.

Mr. Goldberg, after years of experience in distribution among theaters that cater to the Negro, associated with his brother, Jack Goldberg of New York city, came to Hollywood several weeks ago. Looking up George Randol, a friend of long standing, he laid before him a plan for a program of pictures that means the emancipation of the Negro as a producer, his financial headaches are over.

After weeks of planning and discussing, these two men, each a specialist in his field, have a working plan that will give the Negro better pictures and a regular schedule of release. There will be opportunities for boys and girls with ability to become writers and directors, as well as cameramen and technicians. There will be no door in the industry that will be closed to boys and girls of the race. However, one must meet

The practice of squeezing the person that is not in a financial position to resist, will no longer be the rule under this new set-up. There is sufficient money available to make the whole program of pictures, and since these funds come from a banking institution, not in Hollywood, no difficulty is expected.

All the product of George Randol Productions and Bert Goldberg produced before this agreement, will be either disposed of or shelved to make way for this great new era of quality pictures. The policy of the producers will be that the best is all that can be used, writers, actors, directors and all others will have to meet certain standards maintained in other major studios.

The first year's program of 12 features and three specials is under way.

Under the present plan, Mr. Goldberg will have full and executive charge of distribution and Mr. Randol will, in addition to producing three special pictures a year, have full and complete charge of all production for the entire program.

## ALL-NEGRO MOVIE SERIES ON FAMILY LIFE PLANNED BY CLARENCE MUSE, FIRM

### Opportunity for Young Actresses Comes; To Portray Real Negro Life, No 'Uncle Tom' Roles

HOLLYWOOD, Cal. — Clarence Muse, actor, of screen, radio and stage, announced last week that he would seek two girls for the best roles ever given to a young actress in Hollywood. They will have the choice roles of the sisters in a series of six pictures, entitled "The Lovejoy Family, the first of which will be called "Harlem—Here We Come!" depicting the life of a normal family in these times.

According to rumor the young ladies who have first choice at the present time are Margaret Whitten, Theresa Harris, Mae Brooks, Florence O'Brien, Artie Young and Daisy Bufford. No selection has been announced and while the list has not been closed, same parents give each the same advantages in life, one goes one way and the other, another.

In speaking about the role, Mr. Muse stated that the interpretation of these two persons will have much to do with the success of the pictures. For these two people are an integral part of the family whose name will be on the lips of the nation, when this series of the Lovejoy Family begins.

Such human factors, and the realization that they do exist, make this one of Hollywood's greatest undertakings and will place the name of Clarence Muse high on the scroll in Hollywood's Hall of Fame, according to local opinion, because he has declared his aims and ideals will not be compromised in this series about this most human family.

Mr. Muse told the press: "There are many beautiful colored girls whose color ranges from dark to very light, and many of these girls have ability. It is the plan of

Supreme Pictures Corporation to search for these girls and give them their places in the industry.

"This has been happening and the manner which Hollywood uses them after being discovered shows that we are not giving our youngsters the breaks in the profession that they deserve. Our purpose in the making of pictures will include the search for new talent! these rumors are being spread around Hollywood.

The Supreme Pictures Corporation is planning this series and Mr. Muse has signed a three-way contract as actor, writer, and co-director with this company. One of the girls will be sedate and interested in the finer things of life, while the other will be just a youngster whose eyes are being opened and begins realizing that there is more to living than eating, sleeping and other routine matters.

They present a contrast, a contrast that can only be explained by the many factors which are found in every human being. In different proportions are they found in each individual and the proper exploitation or youngsters so they may be able to go farther than we have because they will be aided in their quest for fame and fortune.

"We have had many stars in the theatrical firmament, but they attained heights by going the hard way. We plan to aid our youngsters on the road to success and the opportunity for two young actresses to get a big boost toward their desired goal is being presented by our corporation."

## Paul Robeson Scores Hit In English Film

*Atlanta World*  
*Atlanta* THOMSON  
NEW YORK—(ANP)—"Big Feller," English film which stars Paul Robeson, noted singer and Elizabeth Welch, had its American premiere at Harlem's Apollo theatre this past week and clicked with the major portion of audiences. Robeson is easily the star of the film, though the part assigned to him is not one which will please the thinking people of his race.

The plot is the conventional one—the white man has woven around every role of importance given a colored man—that of being loyal and in love with white children. Robeson's love for children leads him to first search for a lost English child, whom he finds, and then because the child does not want to go home, Robeson with the connivance of his girl friend, Elizabeth Welch, keeps him at his slum home for a couple of days. A white hanger-on of the dock district, in which the scenes were laid, outwits Robeson in a dumb scene, steals the child and returns him to get a large reward, which Robeson later forces him to split.

### SCENE APPLAUDED

He is induced to spend the fortune in winning and dining a white woman, and then goes back to his colored friend when he is broke and sick. In a speech which brought forth rounds of applause from the colored women in the audience, Miss Welch puts Paul out and he back to the docks. Later in a scene which does not ring true, Paul induces the English lad to eat and overcome his revulsion to being a rich little lad again. The play ends with Paul and his sweetheart reconciled on the docks.

Our objection to the plot is that though assigned the major role, Paul is made to appear the dumbest character in the film. Even a cockney dock hand is made smarter than he. Though he is intelligent enough to rate being called on by the Paris police to help find the little lost white lad, he is so

dumb all kinds of tricks and schemes are played on him.

### WHITE PRODUCER

As usual the white producer, although starring a colored man and woman, cannot forget he is a white man, and thus is supposed to uphold white supremacy and superiority before the world, despite exigencies of the plot.

Robeson sings numerous songs throughout the play, breaking into song at the least provocation. Elizabeth Welch's performance is without a flaw, her singing as a cabaret entertainer is superb. And her renunciation scene with Robeson easily ranks with any similar one we have ever seen.

Scenes which will not go so well with white audiences are the cabaret scenes in which white and colored entertainers work harmoniously together, patrons eat and drink together without any semblance of friction. In fact, they indulge in horseplay of a rough nature and no fighting is ever done.

### APPEAR SO DUMB

Were it not for the fact that the two main colored characters in the play were made to appear so dumb, we would say the flicker would sell to Negro theatres throughout the land.

Frank Schiffman, Apollo owner, who has bought the American right to it, will do pretty good though, for the colored man and woman who does not think will see and like the film. It will do some good if it goes over big, for it will induce American producers to use colored players in other than bit parts.

*Atlanta World*  
*Atlanta* 2-26-39  
**Progress  
Film In  
Premiere**

**Royal Unreels**

**Parade Of City**

**Colored Activity**

Five months in the making, costing hundreds of dollars, Atlanta's own motion picture—**PARADE OF PROGRESS OF COLORED ATLANTA**—has its premier showing today at Bailey's Royal Theatre.

Sponsored by the Atlanta Negro Chamber of Commerce, filmed and narrated by J. Richardson Jones, dramatist-cameraman, the two-reel talking picture runs the gamut of activities of race people in the Gate City.

Illustrating the educational advantages offered here, and giving an insight of Negro business, civic and social activities, **PARADE OF PROGRESS OF COLORED ATLANTA** is packed with interesting visual information, such as never before offered on the silver screen anywhere.

### TOURS OF PROGRESS

Definite evidence of the progress Atlantans have made in business in the past decade is shown as tours through the leading firms are unfolded.

With appropriate historical commentary, views of the five colleges carry the observer from one campus to the other, winding up a most interesting 22 minutes' showing with views of various sports activities of the past season.

### PICTURE IS COLORFUL

Colorful indeed are the candid photographic records of shouting fans, dashing athletes and "between halves" parading of the college bands, co-eds and numerous student bodies contributing to the college world of sports.

J. B. Blayton, president of Atlanta Negro Chamber of Commerce, and J. Richardson Jones are deservedly receiving worlds of praise for this very splendid film record they have compiled.

**\$750,000 to  
Be Spent On  
Race Pictures**

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—(ANP)—In a move that is destined to write a bright new page in the history of the Negro Race two men best able to aid it through the powerful medium of motion pictures combined forces last week. These were

Harry M. Popkin, founder and president of Million Dollar Productions, and Alfred N. Sack, vice president of the Sack Amusement Enterprises.

Their affiliation means that thousands of colored actors and other employees will pass their pay windows, that might never have had an opportunity to enter the guarded gates of the motion picture industry.

Another laudable feature about attache who has proven himself capable, and experienced enough to function in the important duties assigned him will be replaced by a member of the other race, or will he be reduced in rank. To the contrary, Miss Alyce Pettus who started with the company in all around office work, has been steadily advanced until recently she was transferred from the offices on the lot to the elaborate suite of offices downtown, which houses the large and varied theatrical enterprises of Harry M. Popkin.

The public will be benefited by the new set-up in that instead of waiting for months for the next Million Dollar Picture, they will have an opportunity to see one almost every month. Hastening to complete the 1939-40 schedule eight major type films are to be released, by the first of the year, and eight more to follow in the next full season.

Cameras are to start rolling on June 6, on "One Dark Night," with Hattie McDaniels, who is expected to have finished "Gone With the Wind," in time to co-star with Mantan Moreland. Two others are also under preparation, one of which is to be the first picture ever filmed around the Negro soldier in America's wars, with the story built around the life of Col. Charles Young. Approximately \$750,000 will be expended on these productions during 1939-40.

Over six hundred theatres will be affected by the now Popkin Sack merger.

# As Comely New Star Flew In



Miss Frances Redd of Columbus, Mo., who has been selected as leading lady by the George Randol Productions for its first picture, "Midnight Shadow", is shown alighting from a TWA transport plane as she arrived in Los Angeles last week. L to r are Robert A. Flynn, publicity director; George Randol, president, shown greeting Miss Redd; Jessie Lee Brooks, film player; Attorney Curtis C. Taylor, and Eddie Brandon, actor.

## SCREEN WRITERS TO MAKE AWARD TO NEGRO STAR GIVING BEST PERFORMANCE

Public Opinion Sought on Outstanding Sepia Actor and Story Most Helpful to Race During Year

### NEGRO PRESS BUREAU

HOLLYWOOD.—At last the sepia theater is about to get a break. This is noted in the determination registered by local members of the Sepia Theatrical Writers Guild, a newly organized group of sepia Hollywood reporters, who announced a nationwide appeal to be made to film-goers in an effort to learn what type of stories are most desirable, and what sepia actor or actress, gave the most outstanding performance of a role during the year.

The film capitol here is rapidly becoming more race minded in the making and selection of film stories dealing with Negro subjects, or actors.

The Sepia Theatrical Writers Guild, in announcing the contest to decide upon the year's award, seek to solicit the interest and aid of theatregoers and writers alike throughout the nation in making their selections. It is hoped that this widespread interest on the part of the public, will have a most desirous effect upon major film producing studios.

Film fans are asked to pay close attention to the sepia actor who is appearing on the film fare, as porter, maid, comedian, dramatic role, or as star, heavy lead, juvenile lead, character lead, in any film whether while in a white cast in a minor role of an extra, bit player or part player, or the better roles in an all-sepia cast film, in order to select their outstanding performer or story.

Among the leading sepia-screen players here who have achieved greater or lesser distinction for their performances in pictures now being shown to screen audiences are included, Louise Beavers, Clinton Rosamond, Stepin Fetchit, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, Hattie McDaniel, Daisy Bufford, Theresa Harris, Edna Mae Harris, Hattie Noels, Willie Best, Ernest Whitman, Jeni LeGon, Bill Robinson, Nina Mae McKinney, Ralph Cooper, Clarence Muse, and scores of others.

Lawrence F. LaMar is chairman of the award committee of the Sepia Theatrical Writers Guild. Film fans interested in this move on the part of this energetic group of sepia writers, should mail their performer and story selection to Mr. LaMar, at the Dunbar hotel, 4225 Central avenue, Los Angeles, before December 12.

Other members of the Award committee are Earl J. Morris, Harry LeVette, Roy Evans, Jon Daniels, Ruby Berkley Goodwin, J. Cullen Fentress, Paul McGee, Charles Moore and James E. Jones.

Kansas  
Call

THEATERS- 1939  
PICTURE FILMS, ETC.

Oh, for a Gown Like This---and the Role of 'Scarlett'



A scene like this is soon to be enacted in Atlanta when the Scarlett Dress committee of the Junior League will determine who is to be the lucky unmarried Junior Leaguer or member of the 1939-40 Debutantes Club who will wear one of "Scarlett's" gowns at the Junior League charity ball. The picture above shows Miss Vivien Leigh in a scene from "Gone With the Wind."

## Negro Board of Censorship For Motion Pictures Being Sought By Movie Producers

Claims Body Will Aid In Deleting Scenes And Situations  
In Films Offensive To Negroes

### Advancement Predicted In Race Films

HOLLYWOOD.—The information of a Negro Board of Censors, to pass judgment upon motion picture plays, was one of the chief topics of discussion Thursday afternoon when civic leaders and members of the Press were invited to a studio luncheon on the "Horror House" set by Hollywood Productions. The student publisher, said: "I can see no reason why there should not be a Negro Board of Censors to read the scripts of the all-colored-cast film companies, thereby curtailing certain little quirks in pictures intended for Negro consumption. It would be a step forward."

It was pointed out by Laura Bowman, distinguished actress, that some sort of check should be placed upon pictures.

Clarence Muse, speaking on the subject said: "There are many things which are objectionable to all people. They have taken steps to rid their race of derogatory types and stigmas. Italian, Chinese, Mexican or other nations cannot be depicted in a villainous light, or anything that is offensive to the particular group. The same should be true with our race."

It was pointed out by Earl J. Morris, head of the studio's publicity department, that producers of all-colored-cast films, zealous directors, or producers who are white, sometimes inject crap game scenes, stealing of chickens, with a view toward establishing a humorous angle.

Spencer Williams, Jr., stated: "We who produce pictures are prone to err. Such a body would serve as the necessary check for us. Hollywood Productions would welcome such a group of representative citizens to help us protect our race."

Mrs. Charlotta A. Bass. promi-

Floyd Covington, head of Los Angeles Urban League, voicing his sentiments, was heartily in accord with such a move.

Others who attended the studio luncheon and confab were: Mrs. Jessie Terry, member of the Los Angeles Housing Commission; Attorney Herman K. Barnett and his bride, Miss Lillian Jones, secretary to the National Negro Congress; Mrs. Charles McFarland, Mrs. Alice Lee Hayes, Misses Gussie and Theresa Hayes and Mrs. Walter Miller. The press was represented by Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Muse, Mrs. C. A. Bass, Mr. and Mrs. J. Cullen Fentress, Edna Flennour, Harry Levette, Majorie Gordon, Roby Berkeley Goodwin, Lawrence F. LaMarr, John Kinlock and Leonard Christnas.

# "Colored Americans On Parade" Makes Hit With Washingtonians

# SEEK TO FORM NATIONAL NEGRO BOARD OF CENSORS

## "Son Of Ingagi" Different Theme From Other Movies

*Pittsburgh Courier* 12-23-39  
By EARL J. MORRIS  
(Motion Picture Editor)

HOLLYWOOD, Dec. 21.—"Son of Ingagi," the new all-colored cast motion picture which features Laura Bowman and Zack Williams, which will soon be released, is a departure from the themes of the usual Hollywood serial cast fares. The picture was photographed under the title of "House of Horror."

In an exclusive interview with Spencer Williams Jr., writer and co-producer of the latest Hollywood film product, informed me; "Richard Kahn, Dr. Herbert Meyer and myself spent a great deal of time in preparation for this picture because we felt that the gangster type of motion picture was played out.

"It is our intention to give the public a different kind of vehicle and to introduce to them Zack Williams as a sort of black Boris Karloff.

"Zack Williams is a celebrated screen and stage actor and his role of N'Gina, son of Ingagi, half man and half gorilla, is in truth symbolical of the baser natures of people. Laura Bowman as a great woman scientist, actually represents our better qualities. And this age-old struggle between good and evil is personified in this film production.

"Of course we realize that the majority of people who will see 'The Son of Ingagi,' will accept the horror film literally. The picture introduces for the first time heavy make-up of a sepia, launching of a new character.

"Laura Bowman as the scientist, turns in one of the most magnificent portrayals of her theatrical career. We believe that we have a stellar cast in Zack Williams, Miss Bowman, Arthur Ray, Daisy Bufford, Alfred Grant, Jesse A. Graves and Earl J. Morris."

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It was pointed out by Laura Bowman, distinguished actress, that some sort of check should be placed upon pictures.

Clarence Muse, speaking on the subject said: "There are many things which are objectionable to all people. They have taken steps to rid their race or nation of derogatory types and stigmas. Italian, Chinese, Mexican, or other nationals cannot be depicted in a villainous light, or anything that is offensive to the particular group. The same should be true with our race."

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WASHINGTON.—(ANP)—"Colored Americans on Parade," a series of interesting films on the Negro in America, produced and presented by Edward Lewis, young New Yorker, former photographer for the Daily News, has made a decided hit here in Washington.

Staid Washingtonians applauded loudly the appearance on the score of such notables as Judge Myles Paige, James Watson, Toney, Jane Bolden, Colonel Davis of the 369th snaking hands with Gov. Lehman at the annual review of the 369th but weren't at all receptive to the showing of the parade, although they sat in silence.

Bill Robinson, J. Finley Wilson and his cabinet, drew little comment, but when a picture was shown of a colored girl "clowning" with a boy friend in the 369th annual encampment, disgust was plainly registered.

# Margaret Mitchell's Story For Annual Once Rejected

*Contributed by*  
**Anne Equen Recalls School  
Days, Debates With  
Famous Author.**

Margaret Mitchell, author of "Gone With the Wind," the film version of which will have its world premiere here Friday night, once had a story rejected in a short-story contest in which the best story was chosen for the school annual. Here is the story as told by Anne Equen, of Atlanta.

By ANNE EQUEN.

Probably the most talked-of woman in the world today is Margaret Mitchell. When she wrote "Gone With the Wind" she ranked herself a genius and enrolled her name among the immortals. Like all famous people, she is the hit topic of conversation and the most trivial incident or anecdote when applied to her immediately takes on significance.

This fact was brought sharply to my attention the other day. I was on the train, on the way to New York, when I met a lady from Kansas City. The minute she learned that I was from Atlanta she immediately pounced upon me, "Have you ever seen Margaret Mitchell? What's she like? Does she live on Peachtree street? Where's Tara? I'm dying to know."

"Do I know Peggy Mitchell?" I replied, looking proud as punch. "I should say I do. And I'm bragging when I say that we are about the same age, lived on Peachtree street when we were children, and went to the same school."

"Pardon me, if I do boast a bit, but there was a time when I even outranked her in the literary world. It was way back in 1917 when I was editor-in-chief of the 'Facts and Fancies,' the Seminary annual, and she was merely a would-be contributor.

"In those days aspiring young writers submitted manuscripts in a contest in which the best short story was chosen and featured in the school annual. A committee composed of a member of the faculty, the literary editor of the an-



This is a picture of Margaret Mitchell when she was a student at Washington Seminary and when her first attempt at writing was turned down by Anne Equen. Annual and, this time, myself, judged the manuscripts. Peggy Mitchell wrote a story.

"Proudly she entered it in the contest. Promptly it was rejected. But I must say, however, that the decision of the judges was not unanimous. The teacher held out for Peggy's story."

"Could she, in her wisdom, have seen the spark of genius?" interrupted my enthralled listener.

"Heaven knows," I hastened to answer, "but it would have been a far more valuable annual, from a collector's point of view, if I had fired the literary editor and somebody had shot me!"

"This story episode was not the only time I matched wits with Peggy Mitchell while we were schoolmates," I continued in the role of raconteur. "We both loved to debate and being in rival literary societies we were always pitted against each other. My father was a lawyer. So was hers."

We came by our love of arguing honestly. I shall never forget the final debate of one school year. The subject was, 'Resolved: That the United States Should Annex Mexico.'

"I was first speaker for the affirmative. Peggy argued first for the negative. My father wrote my debate and it was a crackerjack. Peggy wrote her own and consid-

ering the seriousness of the subject and the difference between hers and father's respective ayes, she should have been given a handicap.

"My side won, due to the fact that in those days I was quite good at memorizing and I never forgot a single point my father made."

Here I stopped for breath and lit a cigarette. The Lady from Kansas City joined me, taking big drags and blowing rings into the air.

"But it was not Peggy Mitchell, the debater, or writer, that I remember most vividly during high school days," I said, getting a terrific kick out of both my cigarette and my audience. "But it was Peggy Mitchell, the historian, that I stood in awe of. Honestly, that girl knew more history in a minute than most people can forget in a lifetime. She never seemed to study her history lesson, she just knew it. She was what might be called in the theatrical world a natural when it came to historical dates and events.

"She undoubtedly inherited her ability to absorb history from her father, who, although he is a lawyer by profession, today is one of the foremost authorities on history in the south. She literally had a historical background. In the Mitchell household, when Peggy was growing up, the family discussed the War Between the States as though it were still going on. Three times a day around the dining room table they fought and refought the Battle of Atlanta with all the ands, ifs and buts possible.

"It was surprising how real and near that war was to the Mitchells. But then it wasn't so surprising when you recall that Peggy's mother before she married Peggy's father had been Miss Maybel Stephens, daughter of Captain John Stephens, officer in the Confederate army."

"It's no wonder, then, that Margaret Mitchell could write about the siege of Atlanta with so much feeling. I bet she could have shot a couple of damn Yankees herself," said the Lady from Kansas City.

"When it came to the study of English grammar Peggy was good, but not so good as she was in history. I can hear Mrs. Paisley, the English teacher, now as she

was correcting Peggy's theme in class:

"Margaret, you could write, if you would only work hard. You have ability, but you are so careless about the construction of your sentences. Remember, my dear, that a sentence is the complete expression of a thought in words. It must be cohesive, concise and coherent!"

"I wonder what Mrs. Paisley provided she is still alive, thought of 'Gone With the Wind,'" mused the Lady from Kansas City.

## Popular Movie Actress Aids in Campaign



Doing her part in fighting tuberculosis is Mildred G. Davis, actress who is one of the early purchasers of Christmas Seals.

## Howard Has Negro Picture

With the various borough theatres vying for the patronage of Negroes by featuring entertainment on stage and screen which portrays Negro actors and actresses in their best roles, the Howard Theatre, Fulton street and Howard avenue, Brooklyn, again surged to the fore with the announcement that the feature presentation on their screen Tuesday and Wednesday, December 3 and 4 will be "Moon Over Harlem" starring Bud Harris, Cora Grene, Alex Lovejoy and an all-star Negro cast. The Howard and the Citizens Civic Affairs Committee on Saturday entertained more than a thousand neighborhood children at a gala theatre party.

# Maxine Sullivan To Share In Flicker

## Begin Preparations For Film Starring Ol' Satchmo

NEW YORK, Dec. 22—Louis Armstrong and Maxine Sullivan who starred in the flicker "Jeepers Creepers" will be co-starred in another film next spring it was learned this week. The new film will also feature Dick Powell who rode to fame on "Jeepers Creepers." a horse in the former flicker.

Just now Miss Sullivan and Armstrong will perhaps run for another five months if not longer, which means the film cannot be shot until early June. However, when the film comes your way don't say we didn't give you the information six months in advance of anyone else.

Although all figures are not available the producers of "Creepers" admitted to the press that the former production grossed far above expectations which is the reason the two players along with Powell are to be used in another film.

### Path Is Cleared

Pathway to the making of the picture was cleared somewhat with the closing of "Swinging the Dream," a stage play that co-starred Miss Sullivan along with Benny Goodman. Had this show enjoyed a long run the two players could hardly have figured to go Hollywood despite the size of the pay envelope.

While playing in "Swinging the Dream," Miss Sullivan and Armstrong were also doubling at the Cotton club and their going Hollywood would have meant the closing of two Broadway attractions, the Cotton club and the musicale at the Center theatre. And the sad part about it all is that neither production could have withstood the loss of Miss Sullivan and Armstrong who had the lead roles in both.

Joe Glazier, manager of Louis Armstrong, admitted to reporters Saturday that he had agreed to send Armstrong to Hollywood as soon as the famous trumpeter is available for travel, "But," said Glazier, "I will not wreck the Cotton club parade by sending Louis out of town."

The Cotton club's present show

THEATERS. 1939  
PICTURE FILMS, ETC.

## Graphic Scenes in Escape of 'Scarlett' and Friends From Atlanta Aglow With Flames

### 'Scarlett's' Flight to Tara Will Be Re-enacted Today

**Jonesboro Citizens To Portray Famous Trek From Atlanta for Newsreels This Morning; Georgia Scenes Will Appear in Nation's Theaters.**

By WILLARD COPE.

As far as is practicable "Scarlett's" route to the vicinity of Jonesboro, heart of the "Gone With the Wind" country, today will be brought squarely into festivity attending the premiere of the film by re-enactment of Scarlett's dramatic flight to her plantation home from an Atlanta made scene and terrifying by flaming ammunition trains.

Filming of incidents of the journey, for M.-G.-M. newsreels to be shown throughout the country, will start at 10 o'clock at the site of the old Union Station and will end at the station at Jonesboro.

**Miss Molly Puckett Has Role.**

"Scarlett" will be enacted by Miss Molly Puckett; Melanie by Miss Ida Louise Huie; Wade by 4-year-old Lowell Wooten; Prissy, the colored servant, by Leola Lyons, 13, orphaned niece of Annie Kate Prothro, for years a servant of Mrs. W. G. Travis, president of the Jonesboro chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the baby will be represented by a lifelike doll.

Mrs. Travis and Mrs. C. B. Lyle, general chairman of the chapter's committee of celebration, who have had charge of all arrangements, will attend the filming today in an advisory capacity. Costumes were received yesterday via airmail by E. B. Coleman, M.-G.-M. representative, and were taken to Jonesboro where Mrs. Lyle and Mrs. Travis, delighted, delivered them to the youthful players.

**Details Are Completed.**

All details were complete last night, even to replicas of the decrepit horse and ramshackle wagon, in which the terrified fugitives made their escape. Both objects, or "props," together with a truck and trailer to convey them to the various points where pictures will be taken, were supplied by Steve Hall, an enthusiast of "Gone With the Wind," and secretary-treasurer of the National Stockyards Commission Company.

Scene at the station in Jonesboro yesterday when "Scarlett," "Melanie," "Wade," "Prissy" and little "Beau," in their pitiful equipage, reached journey's end in the historic flight from Atlanta as given in "Gone With the Wind." The episode was staged yesterday for news reels by The Constitution and the Jonesboro chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy.



"Melanie." "Prissy," "Wade" and "Scarlett" are shown posed against the foundations of departed buildings which formed the background of the demolished Union Station in Atlanta. The quartet, Miss Ida Louise Huie, Leola Lyons, Lowell Wooten and Miss Molly Puckett, began, immediately afterward, the frantic departure for "Tara."

Constitution Staff Photos—Bill Wilson.

# To Name Winners In Race Film Poll

## Next Week You Will Know The Outstanding Star

By LAWRENCE F. LaMAR

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Dec. 22—With the hectic scramble that featured the first attempt to ascertain an outstanding actor or actress, for screen excellence in photo-acting during the year 1938-39, already fading into the background of current history, members of the Sepia Theatrical Writers Guild, set about making tallies among themselves as to which actor, actress would be honored as recipient of the awards. The awards committee feels that they have rendered a splendid favor to the public, producers and actors alike, in conducting such a poll.

The idea, besides selecting certain artists each year for acting honors, tends to acquaint the public with the fact that Sepia artists are actually a factor in the motion picture end of the show world.

It also calls to the attention of makers of Hollywood pictures, that Race America with its 15,000,000 or more Race members, looms as a potential factor in the domestic film consumption market. Which all means much since the makers of American films, faced with the prospect of a badly curtailed market abroad due to the present European war, must needs find means to develop the domestic market.

Members of the Sepia Theatrical Writers Guild, are happy over the cooperation given the poll by scores of outstanding and important papers throughout the nation. Without this splendid aid from those papers, the poll would have failed miserably. The handful of writers who undertook the task of publicising Sepia Hollywood, have worked hard and unselfishly under extraordinary handicaps. They never solicited, or received one cent for their part.

Next week we hope to be able to publish the names of the winners, and also announce when the awards will be made, along with mention of the type of program best suited for the occasion. It is expected that noted stars, producers and directors from Hollywood's leading studios, will be on hand to take

THEATERS- 1939  
PICTURE, FILMS, ETC.

# 1938 Banner Year For Negro Movie Industry

**Earl Morris Picks Out Best Pictures, Best Actors and Best Executives in Pointing Out Record of the Negro In Hollywood—Predicts An Even Brighter Future.**

By **EARL J. MORRIS**  
Motion Picture Editor

**HOLLYWOOD, Jan. 19**—The Colored Motion Picture Industry looks back on 1938 as a banner year of pioneering. The Negro motion picture audiences awakened to a new interest in sepia films. A patient Negro audience turned out in ever increasing numbers to view colored artists on the screen. The colored film industry is still in its infancy.

But here is the record of Black Hollywood! Nine feature length films and one short is on the credit side of the ledger for the industry.

The cycle started with "Dark Manhattan" produced by George Randol and Ralph Cooper. Then followed "Bargain With Bullets" by Million Dollars Productions... "Life Goes On" a MD pix... "Duke Is Tops" MDP... "Harlem On the Prairie," Jed Buehl... "Two Gun Man From Harlem," Hollywood Productions... "The Rhythm Rodeo," George Randol short... "The Bronze Buckaroo," an HP... "Gang Smas," an MDP and "Harlem Rodeo Range" an HP.

The New Year schedule includes the immediate production of "Reform School" by MDP and "Dawn Of Love," by Hollywood Productions.

## JEFFREY, COOPER HAD MOST STARRING ROLES

Herbert Jeffrey, the singing cowboy topped all other sepia artists with four starring vehicles. Ralph Cooper starred in three. Artie Young had feminine leads in two films.

The industry brought to being these new screen personalities for top honors: Ralph Cooper, Herbert Jeffrey, Lawrence Criner, Artie Young, Lucius Brooks, Mantan Mooreland and Monte Hawley.

Those who won top laurels for dramatic ability, running the gamut of emotions were Lawrence

Harding and Clarence Brooks. Film Editing Spencer Williams stands in a class by himself. He is the only Negro in that phase of the industry. Spencer Williams is probably the best all round Negro film man. He is an executive, writer, actor, film editor and song writer.

Harry Levette led the field as publicity director. He turned out more than a million words in praise of four feature length films.

## CLINTON ROSEMOND TOOK HIGH HONORS

Over on the major lots Clinton Rosemond took honors for dramatic ability. His portrayal of Criner, Spencer Williams and Dr. George Washington Carver, the scientist, is immemorial. The best comedy was done by Eddie "Ro-Jeffrey" leads in firsts. Herbert Jeffrey was the first sepia cowboy. Anderson in "You Can't Take It With You."

Best actress was Theresa Harris in "Toy Wife" and "Jezebel." Lillian Yarbo stole feminine comedy honors in "You Can't Take It With You" and "Wives Under Suspicion."

Spencer Williams, Clarence Brooks, George Randol and Ralph Cooper were the four Negroes of vision who foresaw the possibilities of screen entertainment. Clarence Brooks produced a series of pictures in the silent days. Spencer Williams and Clarence Brooks pioneered in the talkies. George Randol and Ralph Cooper pioneered and established the present sepia Hollywood with their fore-runners.

Mr. Randol now heads his own film concern and plans to start producing within 90 days.

The three Negro executives who distinguished themselves were Spencer Williams, Ralph Cooper and George Randol.

Best supporting roles were portrayed by Edward Thompson, Monte Hawley, Spencer Williams, Ray Fenderson and Charles Hawkins.

Spencer Williams tops the list as a film writer. Original stories. Best sepia continuity writer, including dialogue, action and comedy. Ralph Cooper was next. F. E. Miller, famous comedian and playwright, was the best gag man and writer of film comedy.

The best film dance director produced by Black Hollywood was Lew Crawford.

Musical directions, including scores and incidental music by Phil Moore.

Buck Jones wins honors as a production manager.

Best Negro casting director for sepia films were Ben Carter and Clarence Brooks.

Best in distribution were Halley

es, are most confident in the future of Negro films, although at the present the market is still in the "curious stage."

Harry M. Popkin entered the field as a producer. He entered a new young fortunes

four feature length films. Popkin has met several financial reverses, but he has kept faith and believes that Negroes will soon overwhelmingly support colored films.

Richard C. Kahn is a producer-director and writer. He organized Hollywood Productions. He, too, like the others, has a faith that can't be broken. His lot was probably the toughest of all four. Yet he produced three Herbert Jeffrey pictures. Went into a financial hole giving the Negro audiences their first dual role performance in Herbert Jeffrey.

The New Film Year looks better to the sepia industry. The Negro press has done its share in publicizing Negro films. Colored newspapers have donated space to build a new black industry.

Racial consciousness is developing and doing its share to promote the sepia film industry.

In the earlier stages of the industry Negro audiences were prone to laugh or disregard the colored movies. Just as they did when the young colored doctor or lawyer started to hanging shingles.

## NEGRO AUDIENCES DON'T LAUGH ANY MORE

Today the Negro motion picture audience does not laugh. They know that White Hollywood spends \$250,000 to produce a single picture. For that sum you can produce 15 Negro films. They don't expect the same lavish scenes in Negro products.

They also know that White Hollywood spends this amount and grosses sometimes a million dollars on the film, due to the fact that their pictures play in every civilized country on the globe. They know that the return on Negro films are small. That the pictures play in from 300 to 600 colored theatres in America.

No, the Negro motion picture audience is not laughing at sepia films any more. More and more they are turning out to see them. They know that they are building an industry. That they see Negroes on the shadow stage portraying roles denied them by major studios.

They have formed Fan Mail clubs and are boosting the industry. The year 1939 will be a great one for the Negro film industry. More and more better films

## Plan Stories On Eminent Personages

Historical Dramas  
Plan of Randol Productions, Inc.

LOS ANGELES, Calif., (WS)—

Included in the plans of pictures that will be produced by the George Randol Productions, Inc., are historical dramas which will photographically place the Negro in his right firmament in world history, according to an announcement by George Randol, president of the corporation.

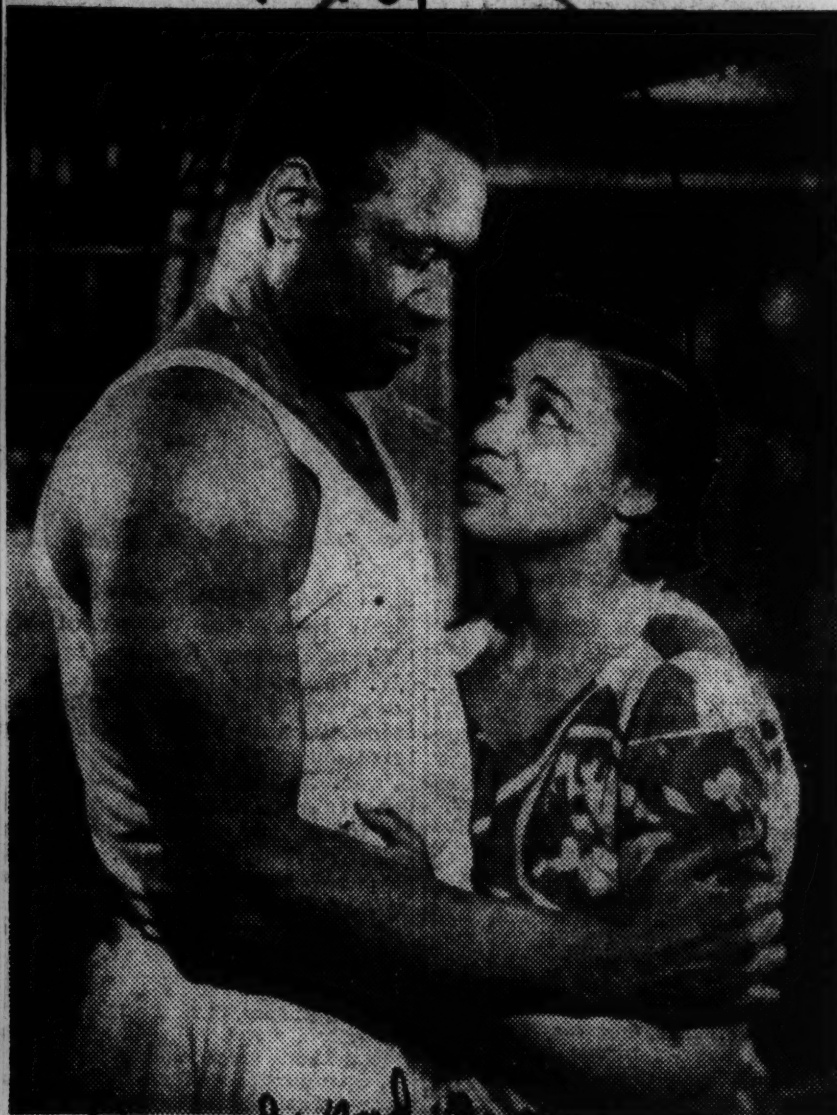
The colored motion picture company plans stories based on the lives of such eminent personages as Col. Charles Young, highest ranking Negro officer of the United States Army; Booker T. Washington, one of America's leading educators; Alexander Dumas, the great French writer; Mary McLeod Bethune, and Sojourner Truth, Negro women of letters and Toussaint L'Ouverture, the great Haitian warrior.

## WAR-TIME ACTIVITIES OF RACE STUDIED

Activities of Negroes in the armed forces of the United States will be the greatest picture ever made with a colored cast. Since the time that Crispus Attucks fell in Boston until the moment the Armistice was signed in 1918, black troops of the United States have played a gallant role in the Army and Navy of our country. That glorious history will be captured and placed on the screen as an historical record for generations to come.

# Stars of "Song of Freedom"

1-21-39



Paul Robeson, internationally known singer and screen star, reached new heights in the screen production "Song of Freedom" which he was starred. The above scene shows Robeson and Elizabeth Welsh, a high ranking star in her own right, in a sequence of the picture.

## Move To Wipe Out Color Bars From Studios

By WILLIAM HARRISON

LONDON — (ANP)— Since the chief means of livelihood for most Negroes resident in London is acting in the films as extras and featured players, great significance is attached to the formation of the Colored Film Artists association, whose purpose is to look out for the social and economic welfare of the actors.

The organizing genius has been John Cox, a well known figure in the community, and he has been assisted by an able corps of men and women.

being because in many studios Negroes have been denied privileges extended to white extras; they have been underpaid and barred from canteens; even stars have been occasionally subject to discrimination. It will endeavor to prevent payments, the employment of artists through unlicensed agencies, and it will seek to wipe out racial discrimination in studios.

A message of greeting from Paul Robeson, dean of Negro actors in London, was read at the inaugural meeting, which was endorsed by the Film Actors association, the Cinematheque, the Electrical Trades union, and the Amalgamation Engineers union.

## N. Y. to See "Let My People Live"

NEW YORK, Jan. 26—"Let My People Live," a 20-minute educational motion picture, starring

Rex Ingram, who played Christophe in the WPA Federal Theatre Project's "Haiti", will be exhibited at the Medical and Public Health Building of the New York World's Fair in 1939. It is the first picture to be accepted for exhibition in this building.

Desiring to make a film of the ravages of tuberculosis among Negroes, the National Tuberculosis association requisitioned the Federal Theatre Project last May for actors. The result was that Rex Ingram, Peggy Howard and Merritt Smith of the cast of "Haiti" were loaned to the association and immediately sent to Tuskegee, Ala., where the picture was made. Besides depicting the havoc wrought by this disease, the educational short suggests means of cutting down the present high mortality rate.

A graduate of Northwestern university's medical school, and for many years associated with the fight to control the spread of tuberculosis among members of his race, Mr. Ingram plays the role of a country doctor in the film. Peggy Howard portrays a tuberculosis victim, while Merritt Smith provides the contrast as a perfect example of health.

## OBJECTIONABLE TERMS TAKEN OUT OF MOVIE

## Almost Ready for Production

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. 16—(ANP)—Negroes who have waded doggedly through the 1200-odd pages of Margaret Mitchell's first book and best seller, "Gone With the Wind," have wondered just what Hollywood would do about many objectionable terms which Miss Mitchell used. To the casual observer it seems that Miss Mitchell had heard none of the nicer terms used when speaking of Negroes. Nor did she lose any sleep wondering whether they should be called Afro-Americans, or other polite forms to designate that the people she referred to were des-

cendants of former African natives. In fact Miss Mitchell used a term very frequently heard on Central avenue by the same people who are so bitterly opposed to the terms Miss Mitchell uses.

It is with decided relief that one can report, from no higher authority than George Zukor, director for the opus, that the objectionable term "nigger" which was used thousands of times (to the Miss Mitchell, has been cut entirely from the script of "Gone With the Wind". Only in a very few instances will the term "darkey" be allowed.

Not only will all objectionable terms be omitted but the picture will present Negro characters in lovable, intelligent, brave roles. They will speak dialect, of course. It must be remembered that prior to the Civil War very few Negroes spoke anything else.

The script of Mammy which Hattie McDaniels is now seriously engaged in studying gives this actress a role that calls for dignity as well as touches of humor. Mammy is to be portrayed as the literal ruler of the O'Hara household. Not only does she boss the fiery Scarlett, she upbraids the sympathetic Ellen for fooling with "low-down po' white trash" (this term is left in the script) and when the plantation meets with reverses it is the ingenuity of Mammy and the faithful "Pork," played by Oscar Polk, which causes the O'Hara household to fare better than the estates of their neighbors. Mammy is not only a dietitian, she is also a beaming Beatrice Fairfax who gives Miss Scarlett advice on how to win a husband. And if the ending is not changed, the sympathetic arms of Mammy will shelter a bitter, ruthless, but completely changed Scarlett at the end of the picture when the one man she has always wanted, Rhett Butler, walks out of her life.

Readers may be surprised to learn that many of the characters were given contracts upon the final O. K. of Susan Merrick, technical advisor who is Miss Mitchell's representative in Hollywood. Miss Merrick has insisted on the actors maintaining dignity. She explained this to studio executives when she said one day in conference, "In the finer southern homes, the servants are not expected to be clown. They reflect the dignity of the people they work for. Many people without a southern back-

ground do not know that this distinction exists. Many times, the Negroes though in the capacity of servants, actually ran the estates attended to much of the business and treated their bosses as though they were children."

However, remembering what Hollywood did to "Green Pastures," we shall have to wait the final shooting to know whether the Negro theatre patron shall put it at a moderate figure) by sending orchids or brickbats to Hollywood for attempting to screen a very difficult and highly controversial story.

World's Fair To Show  
'Let My People Live'

The first motion picture selected for showing in the auditorium of the Medical and Public Health Building of the New York World's Fair, according to Homer N. Calver, Director of Health Exhibits, will be a twenty-five minute film dramatizing aspects of tuberculosis among Negroes, entitled "Let My People Live." This picture was produced by the National Tuberculosis Association and is being distributed at the present time through its branch offices throughout the country. The film was produced as part of the educational program of the tuberculosis associations.

### Hattie McDaniel Set For G. W. T. W. Role

HOLLYWOOD, Jan. (By Ruby B. Goodwin for ANP)—Hattie McDaniel has walked off with the coveted role of "Mammy" in the Margaret Mitchell sensation, best-seller "Gone With the Wind," according to announcement made by Selznick-International studios at Culver City.

Many septuagenarians were tested for the part. Studio officials insisted that the role be interpreted with dignity and earnestness, as the mammy in "Gone With the Wind" is more than a servant. She is a confidant, counselor and matriarch of the O'Hara household.

Clark Gable as Rhett Butler and Oscar Polk as Pork are the only other roles which have been definitely assigned.

Miss McDaniel has added greatly to her following in the current releases, "The Shining Hour," starring Joan Crawford, and the "Mad Miss Manton," starring Barbara Stanwyck. She has just recently completed "It's Spring Again" at the Hal Roach studios.

# Al Moses Lists Race's 'Ten Best' Box Office Attractions

Bill Robinson Leads List, With Duke, Ethel, Louie and Luncford Rated In Order.

By AL MOSES (For ANP)

NEW YORK, Jan. 5—After much consideration and deliberation, we voted the following array of satellites last season's best attractions, whether taken from the box-office appeal (boy, that's important) or pure fan interest:

Bill Robinson, Duke Ellington, Ethel Waters, Louis Armstrong, Jimmy Luncford, Chick Webb, Count Basie, Cab Calloway, "Fats" Waller, Willie Bryant, emcee or as ork leader.

From our vantage point back in the wings, we derived pleasure watching the faces of jewel be-decked ladies of pallid complexions loudly applauding the weekly offerings of . . . Noble Sissle, Earl (Father) Hines, Erskine (Trumpet King) Hawkins, Lucky (watch my leap) Millinder . . . Lovely Avis Andrews, George Dewey Washington, Ruby Elzy, Buck and Bubbles, Eddie Cotton Club) Mallory Blanche Calloway, Sunset Royals Claude Hopkins, Don (Arrangement Master) Redman, Edgar Hayes, Fletcher Henderson, Eubie Blake, Tiny Bradshaw, Ernest Whitman, Chick Carter, et al.

Then there were the incomparable funsters: "Pigmeat" Markham, George Wiltshire, Jimmy Baskette, Sandy Burns, Dusty Fletcher, Swan and Lee, and that darling of them all . . . VIVIAN HARRIS.

Andy Kirk, with sweet singing Pha Terrell and that gracious Queen Bee twinkling ivories (May Lou Williams) may turn out to be the surprise band of 1939 when it comes . . . national ranking time!

## SPORTSMAN TO MANAGE FILM STAR

John Levy Signs to Take  
Care of Herbert Jeffrey,  
Singing Cowboy.

HOLLYWOOD, Jan. 5—John Levy, prominent New York sportsman signed Herbert Jeffrey, cinema actor, and the Four Tones, a musical quartette to a five-year managerial contract. Mr. Levy quipped to intimates about his action,

"John Roxborough signed Joe Louis and look where they are. I think that colored men can manage their artists. As a matter of fact I don't think that color has so much to do with it. But rather it is quality of the talent of the artist and one's ability to place them before the right people."

This marks the second theatrical venture of the noted Harlem sportsman. Young Levy had the daring courage of leasing the famed "Comedy Theatre" on Broadway and presented "Black Rhythm" which came from the pen of Earl Dancer, noted impresario, and Donald Heywood, the composer. The musical revue featured Jeni LeGon and Maude Russell.

Herbert Jeffrey loved by children throughout America as their gallant singing cowboy hero has just completed two film plays, "Bronze Buckaroo" and "Harlem Rides the Range." The Four Tones, ring Rex Ingram, who played the singing quartette have ap-

peared in all of the Jeffrey pictures. Lucius Brooks, bass singer of the musical aggregation invariably plays Jeffrey's buddy and serves as comedy relief.

## Colored Actors In Four Of Year's Ten Best Pictures

HOLLYWOOD, Jan. 19 — (ANP) — Although no colored stars were listed among the top-flight luminaries of the year 1938, colored actors were featured in four of the accredited best films of the year.

In "Old Chicago," Madam Sul-Te-Wan, famous 65-year-old dramatic actress, played the important part of "Beetle." This was one of Twentieth Century Fox's greatest spectacles. In "Jezebel," made by Warner's First National starring Bette Davis, Theresa Harris and Lew Peyton both had important parts, while over 150 other colored players had bits or played in atmospheric roles.

"You Can't Take It With You" by Broadway completed bringing Julian "Billie" Yarbo into the limelight as a screen comedienne and gave Eddie Anderson the fame that was begun two years ago in "The Music Goes Round," both at Columbia studio. In MGM's "Test Pilot," starring Clark Gable and Myrna Loy and Spencer Tracy, a number of colored players served in bits and atmosphere, including the widely known comedian Sam McDaniel.

## Federal Actors Appearing In Fair Picture

NEW YORK CITY—(SNS)—"Let My People Live," a 20-minute educational motion picture, starring Rex Ingram, who played Christophe in the WPA Federal

Theatre Project's "Haiti," will be exhibited at the Medical and Public Health Building of the New York World's Fair in 1939. It is the first picture to be accepted for exhibition in this building.

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A graduate of Northwestern University's medical school, and for many years associated with the fight to control the spread of tuberculosis among members of his race, Mr. Ingram plays the role of a country doctor in the film. Peggy Howard portrays a tuberculosis victim, while Merritt Smith provides the contrast as a perfect example of health.

The music of the Tuskegee Institute Choir is one of the main features of the picture.

Produced by the National Tuberculosis Association, in cooperation with the National Urban League, the Tuskegee Veterans' Facility and the WPA Federal Theatre Project, the film already has been shown in hundreds of Negro theatres all over the country.

# Race Theatre To Develop In Cal.

LOS ANGELES—(ANP)—That the Negro unit of the Federal Theater project, hailed for its current success in "Run Little Chillun," will be brought a step closer to its ideal of Negro Art Theatre, was suggested in a statement released this week by James R. Ullman, newly appointed director for FT of Southern California.

"From the archives of American history—both past and present, we are considering a living newspaper dramatization of the Negro and his struggles in the United States to be done by the capable cast of players within the Los Angeles unit," Ullman stated.

"Because of the success of 'Run Little Chillun' and its contribution to the local project in helping to popularize federal theater productions, we aim to keep the unit working." While no closing date for 'Run Little Chillun' is announced, several future plays for the unit are being considered. Among them is "St. Louis Woman" by Arna Bontemps and Countee Cullen.

"Go Down Moses," by Theodore Brown, which depicts the life of Harriet Tubman, a slave woman who made a career of leading her people to freedom through the underground railroad, is also on the list of possible productions.

## COURIER FAILS TO VERIFY RUMOR

By EARL J. MORRIS  
Motion Picture Editor

HOLLYWOOD, Jan. 19—

The office of Harry M. Popkins, executive producer of Million Dollar Productions, denied the rumor that the film company had "gone out of business."

The rumor was circulated throughout the colored film colony late Wednesday night and Thursday that Harry M. Popkins "was disgusted" and had closed its doors.

The Courier communicated with the offices of Harry M. Popkins and the secretary, a Miss Brown, said: "It's just idle rumors. We are preparing to go into production on 'Reform School' starring Louise Beavers.

Miss Smith, secretary to Leo C. Popkins, brother to the producer and director, stated, "We are not going to close. I know nothing of the rumor."

Alice Petty, secretary at the studios and director of the internal activities of the Million Dollar Productions, also had no knowledge of the alleged action on the part of the Popkin Brothers.

Efforts to communicate with either of the Popkins or Harry Levette, publicity director, proved futile.

The rumor which spreaded throughout the Central avenue districts and colored film colony were to the effect that Leo C. Popkins had called Lawrence Criner, Moite Hawley, Reginald Fenderson and Mantan Mooreland and notified them that the studio was closing its doors.

Daily newspaper reports of Harry M. Popkins losing management of the Olympic Stadium, a fight arena, and the allegation that the Stadium was \$30,000 in the red aided in giving a semblance of credence to the rumor.

Mickey Rooney-Rex Ingram  
... Co-Stars of 'Huckleberry Finn'



Called Finest Colored Actor In America

Co-Starred With Mickey Rooney In M-G-M Production

HOLLYWOOD—A Negro actor today is enjoying the warmest public reception for a motion picture performance that has been accorded one of his race since Louise Beav-

ers became a sensation in "Imitation of Life."

The man is Rex Ingram, probably the finest colored actor in America today. The role is that of Jim, the runaway slave in Metro-Goldwyn Mayer's filmization of Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn," in which Mickey Rooney is starred as Huck Finn.

When Producer Joseph L. Mankiewicz set out to make "Huckleberry Finn," he and Director Richard Thorpe planned to make the high point of the picture the ever-present love for freedom in every man. This theme was centered in Jim, the slave whose life was wrapped up in his desire for a free life, and the understanding of freedom which this great man brought to a river boy.

CO-STAR OF PICTURE

Since the role of Jim was literal-

ly a co-starring one with that of Huck, as played by young Rooney, M-G-M wanted the greatest available race dramatic actor. Rex Ingram was chosen. Ingram, who played "De Lawd" on the screen in "Green Pastures" and did several Broadway plays, was appearing in New York in "Sing Out the News" at the time "Huckleberry Finn" was being planned.

Although not a singer and dancer, he was a hit with the "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones" song, during which he danced. He was brought to Hollywood for the Jim role and today, as "Huckleberry Finn" is made ready for release around the nation, it is predicted he will be a sensation.

Already, the picture has been previewed twice and it is a remarkable thing that half of all audience reaction cards turned in have praised his performance. Such reaction for a colored actor has never been experienced in Hollywood before. Meanwhile, Ingram has returned to the Broadway stage to wait until Hollywood beckons again with another fine role.

## Kobeson Breaks With Commercial Film Industry

LONDON, March 9—(CNA) — Paul Robeson, internationally famous actor and singer, has broken with the commercial film industry.

Robeson this week indicated his intention to make independent and socially significant pictures. He said he would like to go to Soviet Russia to do a film with Einstein, then return to Hollywood to make, independently, a picture about Oliver Law, the Chicago Negro, who died leading a contingent of the International Brigade in Spain.

In explaining his break with the big commercial studios, Robeson said:

"I have done so because I am no longer willing to identify myself with an organization that has no regard for reality—an organization that attempts to nullify public intelligence, falsify life and entirely ignores the many dynamic forces at work in the world today."

Robeson maintained that, within the framework of the commercial film industry, there is now very little chance for an individual to express himself, or to do anything which is sincere or worthwhile.

## REX INGRAM SENSATION IN "HUCKLEBERRY FINN"



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### Eddie Anderson Signed For "Gone With the Wind"

Eddie Anderson, Negro actor who played "Noah" in the motion picture "The Green Pastures," and is famed as Jack Benny's "Rochester," was signed today to portray Uncle Peter in "Gone With the Wind," Selznick International technicolor production starring Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Leslie Howard and Olivia de Havilland, directed by Victor Fleming.

Anderson was born in Oakland, 30 years ago. He had a successful career as a vaudeville dancer and funny man before he played Noah. He recently played in "You Can't Take It With You."

## Epithet Removed From 'Gone With The Wind' Script

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. — (By Ruby Berkeley Goodwin for ANP)—Negroes

who have waded doggedly through the 1200-odd pages of Margaret Mitchell's first book and best seller, "Gone With the Wind", may have wondered just what Hollywood would do about many objectionable terms which Miss Mitchell used. To the casual observer it seems that Miss Mitchell had heard none of the nicer terms used when speaking of Negroes. Nor did she lose any sleep wondering whether they should be called Afro-Americans, or other polite forms to designate that the people she referred to were descendants of former African natives. In fact Miss Mitchell used a term very frequently heard on Central avenue by the same people who are so bitterly opposed to the terms Miss Mitchell uses.

It is with decided relief that I can report, from no higher authority than George Cukor, director for the opus, that the objectionable term "nigger" which was used thousands of times (to put it at a moderate figure) by Miss Mitchell, has been cut entirely from the script of "Gone With the Wind". Only in a very few instances will the term "darkey" be allowed.

Not only will all objectionable terms be omitted but the picture will present Negro characters in lovable, intelligent, brave roles. They will speak dialect, of course. It must be remembered that prior to the Civil War very few Negroes spoke anything else.

The script of Mammy which Hattie McDaniel is now seriously engaged in studying gives this actress a role that calls for dignity as well as touches of humor. Mammy is to be portrayed as the literal ruler of the O'Hara household. Not only does she boss the fiery Scarlett, she upbraids the sympathetic Ellen for fooling with "low-down po' white trash" (this term is left in the script) and when the plantation meets with reverses it is the ingenuity of Mammy and the faithful "Pork", played by Oscar Polk, which causes the O'Hara household to fare better than the estates of their neighbors. Mammy is not only a dietitian, she is also a beaming Beatrice Fairfax who gives Miss Scarlett advice on how to win a

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Readers may be surprised to learn that many of the characters were given contracts upon the final O. K. of Susan Merrick, technical advisor who is Miss Mitchell's representative in Hollywood. Miss Merrick has insisted on the actors maintaining dignity. She explained this to studio executives when she said one day in conference, "In the finer southern homes, the servants are not expected to be clowns. They reflect the dignity of the people they work for. Many people without a southern background do not know that this distinction exists. Many times, the Negroes, though in the capacity of servants, actually ran the estates, attended to much of the business, and treated their bosses as though they were children."

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"Uncle Billy" and Shirley Temple

# LEADING ROLE PORTRAYED BY MISS BEAVERS

## Story Written For Actress

Produced by Million Dollar Productions with all-colored cast. Harry M. Popkin, executive producer, Arthur A. Brook, supervisor, Leo Popkin, director. Time—present. Place—Large city.

HOLLYWOOD, April 13 —(A NP) — Louise Beavers, America's own internationally famous dramatic actress, had never been allotted the proper vehicle she had always craved until Million Dollar Productions had James O'Donnel and Hazel Barnes write "Reform School" for her. After a long and illustrious career as a featured player in major studios, she was first elevated to real stardom in "Life Goes On," her first all-colored cast feature for Million Dollar.

But still, in spite of all the nation-wide acclaim she received as the mother of two boys following diverse paths, it was not until she interpreted the powerful but difficult role of "Mother Barton" in Reform School did she have an opportunity to give vent to as wide a variety of emotions as it calls for. And to make her character painting more vivid, never before has she had better support, finer direction and better technical assets so necessary for the perfection of a motion picture.

Reform School is the most true to life, yet sensational story of juvenile crime ever flashed on the screen. As Mother Barton, Miss Beavers is the deeply sympathetic member of the parole board in a large city, who earns the love and confidence of youths who fall into the laws clutches, and opposition of other parole board members and reform school officials who doubt that her plan for an "honor system" is practical. Events develop that

place her in charge as superintendent when the brutal superintendent, "Stone," is discharged. Soul-trying events succeed each other rapidly, principally centered around a brutal guard, one of Stone's henchmen, a discouraged youth and his five pals, graduates of Harlem's streets and alleyways, and it appears that the honor system has failed.

Reginald Fenderson as Freddie Gordon, the wayward boy turns out a very realistic performance; Monte Hawley as "Jackson" the head guard will earn the sincere hisses usually given a villain; Maceo Scheffield did a very convincing interpretation as Stone; Edward Thompson and Vernon McCalla, although not in lengthy roles, play the parts of uncooperative but later convinced officials excellently, while Edward Patrick does well as Mr. Gordon, father of Freddie.

Bill "Bojangles" Robinson and Shirley Temple in a scene from one of the three dance numbers in "Just Around the Corner" in which the famous tap dancer has a star role. Shirley affectionately refers to "Bojangles" as "Uncle Billy."